

BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY: Julia Souza, 61, Dole Company (Hawaiian Pine Company) packing and trimming forelady

Julia (Mero) Souza, Hawaiian-Caucasian-Filipina, was born on August 25, 1918, in Honolulu, Oahu. She is an only child with four stepbrothers and two stepsisters. Since her parents divorced while she was very young, Julia was raised by her grandparents on Molokai. She attended schools on Molokai and Oahu. In 1933, she entered McKinley High School only to leave three months later.

Julia worked as a maid for a Chinese family in early 1934. Later, she was hired as a "jam worker" for the winter crop at CPC [California Packing Corporation]. At the end of the winter season [January 1935], Julia obtained work at Libby's warehouse. After a few months, she left Libby's to become a packer at Hawaiian Pine Company where she moved up to forelady in 1940.

Julia married John Souza in 1939. She left the cannery in December 1940 to have the first of three sons.

In 1951, when her third son began elementary school, Julia returned to Hawaiian Pine. She again started as a seasonal packer but achieved intermittent status at the end of the season. She became a forelady a few years later. In the early 1960's, Julia worked at Hawaiian Host Candies and Liberty House during the off-season.

She is still a forelady today and is an active member of the Makua Alii Senior Citizens Club. Her husband, John, is a retired mechanical engineering supervisor for the City and County of Honolulu.

Tape No. 6-5-1-79 and 6-6-1-79

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Julia Souza (JS)

February 27, 1979

Kuliouou, Oahu

BY: Michiko Kodama (MK)

MK: Interview with Mrs. Julia Souza on February 27, at her home in Kuliouou.

Could you first tell me when and where you were born?

JS: I was born August 25, 1918, in Honolulu.

MK: Mrs. Souza, you told me that your parents were divorced when you were very young, and that you spent part of your childhood, 1923-1932, with your grandparents.

JS: Right.

MK: Your grandparents used to grow pine at Hoolehua, Molokai?

JS: No, my grandparents worked for the pineapple company in Hoolehua, Molokai. They worked as a laborer. They didn't own the pineapple, but they worked for the people that was running the pineapple field when I was young.

MK: Do you remember who the people were that owned the field?

JS: Gee, I'm not sure. But I thought it was---they called them as Hawaiian Pineapple Company, run by the Hawaiian Homes Commission. I think. I mean I was so young. I think they worked for the Hawaiian Homes Commission.

MK: Can you sort of describe the kind of work that your grandparents did?

JS: First of all, they did weeding in the pineapple field. Hoe-hana, they called it--getting the weeds out. Then, when it was time to plant, they were planting pineapple with pulapulas [i.e., slips], they called it. They get paid by contract. How much they get paid, I'm not sure. But that's how they got paid, by contract. Then, all they did after they plant the pineapple, whenever they're



needed to go back and dig weeds, hoe-hana, they're called to go back and do hoe-hana.

MK: You mentioned the word pulapula; what does that mean?

JS: It's a growth, it's a type of top. It's small and it's growing through the side. What they do is they break it. They strip off the bottom leaves and then they plant [the top]. They plant the pineapple like that. Evidently, that's how they plant the pineapple; by using pulapulas.

MK: At that time, did you help your grandparents in any way?

JS: Yes. At home, I did the housework; clean the house, wash my grandparents' clothes--which is very dirty with Molokai Hoolehua red dirt. It's very, very dirty. We don't have washing machine. I have to wash on a rock. That used to be the old days. We don't have no washboard, but we have this big rock on the outside bathroom. I had to do lot of pounding with such skinny hands of mine to get the red dirt out from my grandfather's pants and my grandmother's clothes. That was my duty, to take care of my grandfolks' clothes. My pay was a package of cracked seed. Five cents package of cracked seed, which was a big package. Oh, I was satisfied with it. Not all the time you can get cracked seed.

Those days, money was really hard. My grandparents really had to work hard to get money. But the thing is, at that place where we were, at the homestead, my grandma raised chickens and she raised pig. That's how we lived on. Then she and my grandfather--he's my step-grandfather--they go out fishing and they get our fish. That's how we live. We buy the poi from the poi factory, and my grandmother mixed flour with the poi to stretch our food. That's how we managed to live. We have cows that has little babies. People own the cow and asked us to raise the little babies so they won't be too wild. At the same time, we have free milk. That's how we have free milk, from the cow. When we need pig, pork meat, my grandfather kills a pig. Or chicken. So that's how we lived. Country. It's a very good life.

MK: It seems that your grandparents had to work quite hard. I was wondering what you thought about working, when you saw them working?

JS: Well, at that particular time, I was so young, I didn't even think anything about working. In fact, I thought that was lot of work--by washing their pants and clothes, being so dirty. I thought it was lots of work. But come to think about it now, that wasn't the work actually. They had the work when they have to go out on the field and get poked with the pineapple leaves. They really did work hard in able to earn whatever wages that they paid them at that particular time.

MK: At that time, did you have any ambitions or ideas of what you wanted to do when you grew up?

JS: No, not then. All I used to do was ride the horse. That was my transportation to the stores. We had people's horses that my grandfather trained 'em. We keep it with us. When you young, all you think about is play. It's not anything serious then.

MK: Did you ever think about what you wanted to be when you grew up, later on maybe?

JS: I wanted to be a nurse. I wanted to be a nurse because I used to work with the health nurse in the school at Kaunakakai School. The health nurse comes only once a week, so I used to help the students. When they're hurt, I used to cover whatever bruises they have, whatever sores. Those days, they usually have lot of sores. I used to wash their sores and everything. So doing part of nursing work, helping the Board of Health nurse, I wanted to be a nurse.

MK: Did you have that in mind when you left Molokai in 1932 to attend ninth grade at Washington Intermediate?

JS: I don't think I had that in mind, no.

MK: You were just going to go to school?

JS: Yeah. I was just going to go to school and get whatever education I could have. Maybe, if I had gone more in high school, maybe I would have thought about taking up nursing.

MK: You said that you went to McKinley, but you only went for about three months in your 10th grade year...

JS: That's all. Just a short while. That was Depression year, if I'm not mistaken. A year of Depression. My father got married to a young woman. At that particular time, she had two children--she had a boy and a girl. Depression came, my father wasn't working. I felt that--being with my stepmother--I better not put more burden on them, on my father, because he was having hard time earning money. So I decided to quit school and go look for housework. I did find housework easy, at that particular time.

MK: Why did you go and look for housework?

JS: Well, that was the easier thing that you can get. At that particular time, people needed maid to take care their children. I don't know how I got involved with these people, but this was a Chinese people. They wanted somebody to take care their two boys. Since I'm good with my brothers and sister, I thought I would take up that job and take care the children. All I did was take care the children. Actually, not much housework. Mostly just take care the children. All they need, somebody to take care the children; see that they don't hurt themselves.

MK: Do you remember how you got that job?

JS: Gee, I don't even remember, unless one of my friends [asked me]. I think it was one of my friends, I can't remember her name. Classmate, I think, asked me if I wanted to go and work for these people. [She said] all I had to do was take care the boys. That was Mrs. Yee [the woman who hired me to watch her children], I remember her name. She had two boys and she wanted someone to take care, and for me to go and try. I did. I liked it. But I stayed as long as I could stay.

MK: You say that you stayed, "as long as you could stay." Can you explain that?

JS: Like I said, as long as they needed me I was still working for them. I don't sleep nights [at the Yees' home]. I go home to my father's place. My father and my stepmother. I go home and I go in the morning to work, to take care. Unless they going to go out during the night, then I sleep overnight. So in the meantime, I think I was looking for other place to work.

But it didn't take long that I heard that people was going down to work at the cannery, which I didn't know nothing about it. So I said, "Oh, I'm going to try in cannery."

MK: How did you hear about the cannery?

JS: Class---my friends, young friends that were going to look for job also.

MK: Mrs. Souza, after you heard about working at the cannery, how did you get to CPC [California Packing Corporation]?

JS: I had a good friend of mine that worked for CPC; she and her sister [worked there]. She heard that they needed workers for the month of December--to work at the "jam table," they called it. I said, "Oh sure, I'll give it a try." I went with her. She took me because I didn't know how to find CPC. She told the foreman that she brought a friend to work for his department; what they called it, "jam department."

I went to get my gloves, my hat, and my apron, and showed to what table I was going to go on. There's two girls on this particular short little table. Very interesting. That's the first time I got to work on something like that. They told me what I was to look for. All what I needed to look for was seeds and a big skin that shouldn't be going down [the conveyer belt] for the jam.

There we have lunch period. We have break time. I didn't have to bring lunch because I had friends to tell me where to go and eat. They had cafeteria so we went to eat in the cafeteria. I worked there for about, oh, almost a month.

MK: Can you tell me why they were hiring people at that time [1934]?

JS: Evidently, they had lot of pineapple and they couldn't get that much workers. They usually get school children to work for pineapple canneries. At that particular time, most of the school children is back at school, so they needed extra workers. My friend says, "Ah, you can come down and work and my foreman will put you on to work."

I says, "Okay, I'll give it a try." That's how I started to work for CPC. That was the only time I worked for CPC.

MK: Do you think you could have gotten that job without your friend's help?

JS: Gee, I really don't know. I tell you why; I had already gone to CPC looking for work. The foremans come out and look at you. If they need, they hire. In fact, [based on] my experience--going around different canneries--evidently, they [various canneries] do the same thing. I don't think I would have gotten hired there, because there's lot of people going looking for job. All they need is a few, a handful. I guess without the recommendation of my friend, I wouldn't have gotten the job.

MK: What kind of job did your friend have?

JS: She was a packer. She knew the foreman; that's how [I got the job].

MK: How did you learn your job? You said they showed you how to do it; like how?

JS: Yes. They come over there and they tell. They show you, when the fruit is coming down, and they'll tell you, "This is what you're going to take out." You're going to scoop it out and throw it in one little section. The person is there to instruct you, to tell you how to take it out and what to look for. It's easy for you. As long your eyesight is good, you know just what they're doing. Very, very simple; the procedure is very simple.

MK: So you had to scoop out the leftover fruit and seeds from the skin portion of the pine?

JS: No. From the table. It comes down already all crushed. It comes down all crushed, ready for jam or crushed, or whatever they're going to pack that for. So naturally, if you're going to have lots of brown spots and seeds--pineapples come out, they have seeds--those are the things that they don't want in the jam. They want to take out as much specks as they can so that the crushed or jam won't have all that dirty-looking spots. It's not dirty actually; it's just the seeds and the blemishes from the pineapple. If it's a heavy blemish, we're supposed to take out the heavy blemish, take out the seeds.

MK: Were you taking out the blemishes and seeds with your hand?

JS: With the glove. Your hands in the glove. Two hands, just scoop it out. It's not strenuous. It's really easy work; very easy.

MK: About how many women or girls worked at your table?

JS: At this particular set-up is two persons. Just two persons. It's a very short table.

MK: Did you have a foreperson above you?

JS: Foreman. The foreman that hired me is the one that's in charge of all that---they call it the "jam department."

MK: How were your relations with that foreman?

JS: He was very nice, very nice. Like I didn't know him very well, but he was really nice. Kind and....[he] comes and check on your work. If you're not doing right he'll tell you, "You should take out a little more." But other than that, you're doing your work, he'll just leave you alone. He doesn't bother you at all.

MK: Were there any rules and regulations that governed your behavior while you were working there?

JS: Well, as far as governed my behavior, when you're brand new you're not going to goof off. You're going to try and show what you can do so you going to pay attention. I paid attention to my work. I didn't talk or anything. Only when my glove had a hole, I'd say, "Oh, I need to change my glove because it's wet." They let us go out--they have somebody to take our place--and we change our glove.

As far as rules and regulations---of course, CPC is not like Dole. [At CPC] their hair is covered but not every bit of it. Their cap is made of net. The front part of their hair is in, but the back part of their hair is out. Whether they changed their uniform--arrangements of their hair--now, I don't know. But that time they weren't very particular about getting all the hair in.

MK: What about your apron or shoes?

JS: The apron is furnished by the company. The shoes, at that particular time, you could wear slipper. It didn't have to be a covered shoes.

MK: Your apron, did you take it home every night to launder?

JS: They wash it for you. All you do is, on your way home, you take it out and dump it in a big container.

MK: Can you tell me more about your rest breaks? You said you had rest breaks.

JS: Yes, we had rest break. I remember we had rest break. We'd go into a little room over there that has chairs. We can go over there and sit down. That's when you going to go to the bathroom. Whoever wants to go to the bathroom use the bathroom. Sit down over there until it's time to go back. Usually, the two persons that working together is the ones that go out together. In other words, they shut the machine down, and then they go out on break.

MK: How did you know it was break time?

JS: They come and let you know it's break time. They stop the machine and they say, "Break time." They let you know.

MK: Was there someone there watching to make sure that you would come back to work at a particular time?

JS: What you do is follow everybody. When you see them stand up and start moving, it's time for you to move, also. That's how we do; whenever they go back, we all follow and we go back. Time for us to go back to work.

MK: How about lunch?

JS: Lunch, we had half an hour lunch. CPC has a cafeteria and we can go out to eat cafeteria style. Pick what you want and pay for it. There's tables in there that you can sit and eat, and then go back to work. Usually, you have whistle sounds. The first whistle means "prepare to go back." You have to be on the table when the second whistle come on. When the second whistle come on, that's when all the machines start working. You have to be there then.

MK: You said that you have a cafeteria, you have your bathroom; did they have lockers?

JS: Yes, they have lockers. But I shared my locker things with my friend because they have locker. I shared, put my purse in my friend's locker.

MK: Why did you share a locker?

JS: Well, it wasn't necessary to have another separate locker. They don't have that many locker, too, I think. We planned that we were going to locker together so I didn't even think about getting something separate from her.

MK: It seems that you were really close to that friend. Did you make other friends when you worked there?

JS: Uhm....not very many because you don't get to see the people, because they all in the different departments. I wasn't there long enough to make that much friends. My friends' friends come and talk to me and stuff like that. But I can't remember who their names are, but they know my friend because she always works there



as a seasonal worker. Then, this particular time, they call it the "winter crop." That's what they were working on, the winter crop.

MK: You said that your friends' friends would come talk to you...

JS: Yes, they would come talk to me because she's with me. They'll come and talk to me. They're very friendly.

MK: When could they talk to you?

JS: When we go out rest because it's not only us going out to rest. They have the other tables going out to rest also. Or when we go to lunch, like that. They come and talk to you. They friendly, very friendly.

MK: How about at the table, when you're doing your jamming work, what do you do at the table besides doing the work?

JS: Nothing. Just put your head down and pick up all the things that you supposed to pick up. You could look up a little while, but you can't stay too long. You have to look down all the time because the food, it keeps moving. Keeps moving so you have to get as much as you can get out from there. Of course, from there then they go another big table. This other table, people is getting all the blemishes out also. They want it to be clean crushed, not blemishy crushed, so that's why.

MK: So there are more than two people working on the jamming section?

JS: Oh yes, uh huh. They have another table, sort of a wide table, that they have more people on it. But this one here is the crushed [fruit] that's coming from the skin. That's what we were working on. Every Ginaca had two girls, right down the line. I don't know how many tables they had.

MK: Did you enjoy that work?

JS: I did. It was so simple, I really did. I enjoyed the work. But then, I still wanted to work but they didn't need us so they laid us off.

MK: Before we move on to the next job that you got, can we move back a little bit and have you tell me what hours you worked?

JS: That was regular hours. From 7 o'clock in the morning till whatever time [was] the quitting time--because you never had the same quitting time. But those days, they didn't have such thing that it has to be an eight-hour work. There are times we get through 1 o'clock, there are times we get 2 sometimes 3 o'clock. That depend as to how much fruit that we have to keep on working. We have more fruit, we work longer.

MK: You were saying that you left this job because you were laid off;

what job did you go to next?

JS: I don't think I did anything after that. From that Christmas time until I went to another working place, I didn't do anything. I just stayed home and helped my mother with her children.

MK: Since you were at home with the children and not getting paid, did you miss having that money?

JS: No, I didn't. My father gave me some spending money. But I wasn't very selfish, though. I mean, [I didn't] expect that he gives me money all the time. He gives me money if I need it. But I didn't make it a habit.

MK: How much were you making when you were working at CPC?

JS: I won't be able to quote the price. I think we were getting about 15 cents an hour, if I'm not mistaken.

MK: How did that compare with your houseworking pay?

JS: Well, the houseworking pay, one week I was only getting about dollar-half [\$1.50], \$2.00 a week. Over there [CPC], if I work the whole week and get 15 cents an hour, I still make more money than housework.

MK: Was that one of the reasons why you originally went to pine in the first place?

JS: Oh, I don't know. I just want the experience, I guess, working different place instead of just housework. Yeah, the experience of working housework. Like when I was younger I used to work housework, too, so I would like to try something else. Maybe that's why I wanted to try the cannery.

MK: So that's partly why you went to CPC. After you left CPC, you didn't do anything for a while. Then you went to Libby's in 1935.

JS: Yeah, I had planned to go work other canneries if I could. In fact, I wanted to register all three canneries. You have to go down and register. All three canneries. I went to Dole. [At the time, Dole was called Hawaiian Pineapple Company.] My first preference was to Dole. I went to Dole. I had gone to CPC and I had gone to Libby.

But if you didn't register, as long as they want you, they'll just hire you and register you in later. That's what [happened to] some of the people that I seen that was being hired. They got hired--in fact, when I went December, I was hired first before I registered.

I figured I wanted to be called in whatever cannery. The first cannery called me, I was going to work, rather than idling, not doing nothing. I wasn't going to look for any more housework.



I registered three canneries. Libby was the first one that hired me, at that particular time, 1935, May. I think it's the latter part of May.

MK: You said that you didn't want to go housework, but did you ever consider other kinds of jobs?

JS: No, I feel I didn't have any other experience to go work in anything else. I wasn't too much of that challenging type.

MK: You mentioned registering. Can you explain to me what you mean by registering?

JS: Registering is, they want your name and your address. It was no big thing. You just go over there and just write your name and your address. That's all they ask you for. At that particular time, they didn't have Social Security so they just....I guess keep their record of when they hire you. They want to keep the record. That's all they did--just take your name and your address.

MK: Did they ask you for your age?

JS: Yes. Your age also. That's all. There wasn't nothing else. I guess it's just to keep you on record.

MK: Did they check your age very carefully?

JS: Uh uh [no]. I don't think they did, because I know I lied my age. Of course, not realizing [why] I did. I had a purpose, I guess. Maybe I wasn't old enough. I wasn't 16 [years old]; I figured they wouldn't hire me even if I was 15. But later I found out they were hiring people 14, 15, and 13. But I figured, well, if I'm going to be 15 they won't hire me, so I lie my age. Instead of saying I was born 1918, I gave them my record as 1917.

MK: That was when you registered at...

JS: All [three] canneries, all the canneries.

MK: Going on to your Libby's experience which started in May, 1935, can you tell me how you knew about the job openings?

JS: Like I said, I was determined to go to all different canneries. But then I thought I'd try Libby first and see whether I would get hired there. But that was several time going back now, before I got hired. In fact, I think after going back three or four times, five times, I was getting kind of disappointed. But then finally, I got hired---I mean, this foreman came out and said they were going to hire warehouse workers. He was a cannery foreman, he wasn't a warehouse worker. I was desperate. I said, "Gee, I'd work anything."

He looked at me and he says, "Oh, if you want to work anything,

okay, we'll take you in and have you work warehouse."

So I did go and went to work warehouse.

MK: You mentioned that you had to go back. Can you explain what you mean by that?

JS: Those days, in order to get hired for any job, you have to show interest by going back [to the cannery hiring area] more often than one time. You got to go over there and show your face all the time. They see your face, they know you're interested, they know you want the job. So I didn't give up. Going back the first time, they said, "We don't need anybody today."

Then I said, "Well, I'll wait till next time again, then I'll go back again."

They said, "Oh, we're not hiring today."

That's what I mean by going back and back. See, they say they're not hiring today. [They say] "Oh, come so-and-so time. Maybe [said with emphasis] we'll hire." That's why, in order to get hired, we'd have to go back all the time. Maybe this week about two or three times. The next week go back two or three times. But I went back only that particular week, two, three times I went back.

The foremans come out and they look who and who is there. There's quite a bit of people out there, men and women. They [i.e., the foremen] come out and they eye the workers, they look at the workers. I don't know what their intention by just looking at the workers, but they come out, they look at the workers. Then, to themselves, I guess they said, "Oh, I think that person over there, or that woman over there is a good prospect," or something. That's what I think, I don't know. But that's how they come out, and they look at you.

Then you say, "Oh, I looking for a job. How come you folks not hiring?"

"Oh, not today. Maybe next time, maybe tomorrow."

That's what I mean by going back two, three times before you actually get hired.

MK: How did you know that this was how you would get a job?

JS: I don't know, it's on my own. I just decided on my own. I was sort of persistent, I think; figuring that I wanted to work in the cannery any way.

MK: How did you know where to go?

JS: Like I said, was it friends to start with. We had people talking about going down to the cannery and [about] they hiring people. Who I actually got the message from, I won't be able to pinpoint that. But I know, I must have heard it from somebody.

I see now, going back, my mother used to be a worker. My own mother. She was a trimmer, she worked for Dole. I think that's what made me feel like trying to go and get involved, work for the pineapple company. I know my mother was working as a trimmer for Dole, but I thought I'd try different canneries because Dole wasn't hiring. I thought, "Well, the first cannery going to hire me, I'm going to go."

So maybe that's where I got the urge to go and look for canneries. Coming back to think about it, my mother was working as a trimmer there. Maybe that's why. I thought I'd go and try Libby; it looked like they were going to hire anytime. I don't know, it's just a instinct, I guess. But I got hired within a few days, going back and forth over there.

MK: Do you know why you were chosen?

JS: I wouldn't be able to say. I don't know why I was chosen. In fact, I wasn't the only one that was chosen. There were several other women; girls--young girls--were chosen. I guess, if I was supposed to be there waiting by myself, I would be afraid. But we had the other girls, lots of girls. We made friends [while] trying to apply for the job. There were several of us that were hired; I think about four or five of us. How I was hired, I wouldn't be able to say.

MK: You mentioned that there were many girls applying for the jobs; were you competitive?

JS: No....I don't know. I figure I'd give it a try. If they want me, they hire me. If they don't want me, well, I'll try again some other time. That's my attitude that particular time.

MK: Going after the same jobs didn't get into the way of making friends with the girls there?

JS: Yes, that's right. We all made friends and we said, "Oh, let's try again. Don't give up." That's what gave us the fight to keep on going, because we kept on going. We kept on saying, "Well, we give it a try again. One more time."

I said, "I'm going to try Dole, too. If Dole don't hire me, I'll try CPC." I did go to Dole. I tried at Dole also; I tried at CPC. Big crowd outside; lot of people looking for a job. For them to see you and to recognize you, you have to put your hands up. The foremans, they go on an elevated thing in able to see the individual. Now whether they were looking for young girls, pretty girls, ugly girls, or whatever, I wouldn't be able to say. But they were

picking lot of young people. Well, most of us were women. They were picking up lot of young girls. Pretty ones, too, some of them. I didn't consider myself as one pretty one, but anyway, I was happy that they hired me.

Anyway, like I said, I had tried the other canneries in the meantime, but they didn't hire. I went back to Libby again. Then I finally got hired there.

MK: Can you tell me what kind of job you got at Libby's?

JS: Yes, at warehouse, packing the labeled cans in the carton box. That's what we were doing, just packing it all in the box and push it on the side. Then they stack it up, the boys will stack it up. That was with the smaller cans. There's a knack of packing those cans. They show you how to do it by grabbing so many cans to put it in the box in able to get it all right in. There's a little technique in packing the pineapple cans in the box. The experienced girls shows us how to do it. Then we have the gallon cans. We worked with the gallon cans, too. They show us how to do it. Then, we have that 46 ounce; we do that also. But like I said, it has to be a knack to do it.

MK: Can you explain?

JS: It's how many cans to pick in that particular size. Like for instance, if you have a 2-tall cans, and you need about 20, you need 5, 10, 15, 20; that's four rows [of five cans each]. You don't go picking up only two or three. You have to get your hands around the can and try to pick up five cans at a time. The five cans will go in fit. You have four rows, and you have another four rows. That's what I mean by "knack." You have to know how to do it.

MK: How did you come to get this knack?

JS: Oh, you got to practice. You try to pick it up, they slip out of your hands. You're not that good until you work a little while. I guess it comes to you. Finally, you get the grip. Actually, it's the grip, how to pick it up.

Then you have to close the box. There's a way of closing the box also. That cross-wise. We used to do it that way. But now, I guess, they just close it like that [cross-wise] and they run the masking tape on it or whatever. But at that particular time, we usually have it cross-wise. You put one [flap] under and the other one, you just lift it up. That's what we used to do. But then you have to move fast in able to catch up with the cans that's coming down, because we have only about four girls. In that size, like for instance the 2-tall, you have four girls. The 2-1/2, you have four girls; They have all different machines. It'll [i.e., can will] come down automatically, and you pack it in the case.

- MK: You mentioned earlier that the experienced girls showed you. Was there any other type of training for that job?
- JS: No, no. Those days, they don't train you too much. All they do is show you the fundamental; what and what to do. They don't have such thing as training program. No training program; you just being left alone. They going to come and instruct you. After they instruct you, you left alone. You going to try and adapt yourself to the job.
- MK: How long did it take you to learn how to do it?
- JS: It didn't take me long because the size of cans that I worked with, it was the 2-1/2. Just four cans and it was easy, although it was heavy. After working continuously, you get sort of a muscle ache right about here [i.e., forearm]. But it wasn't that hard. All you do is pick up four cans at a time, so that was easy. There's two rows. That wasn't hard. It didn't take me long to learn how to pack my case.
- MK: How did girls who were having a hard time manage?
- JS: Well, I didn't see anybody having hard time. Unless the supervisor who's there, foreman, sees them having hard time. I guess they'll go and help them. But as far as for myself, I didn't have any more help besides that one showing.
- MK: You just mentioned the foreman; what did he do and what were your relations with him?
- JS: He's in charge of all the workers, boys or girls there. He tells them what and what they're supposed to do. There, we don't have whistles. So there, they tell us when to go on break and when to go on lunch. I didn't buy lunch from cafeteria there because I wasn't very familiar with the area. I used to bring my own lunch and eat. There's an area there that you could stay and eat. I wasn't the only one, they have quite a bit of ladies---not ladies, but they're girls. Quite a bit of girls all ate lunch, too. Very few of them go out to eat.
- MK: Where did you keep your lunch and your belongings?
- JS: There's a little place over there that we can go and put our lunch on the table. We have our name on the package and we leave it right there; nobody touch it.
- MK: For your rest breaks where did you go and what did you do?
- JS: It's the same area where we go and eat lunch. We just sit down, go bathroom. We don't use gloves over there. Oh, we use that cloth gloves but we don't use hat or anything. Not necessary. No apron. We only have these gloves, in case the cans is hot. We need the gloves to protect our hands.

MK: When you were working there, what were the hours like?

JS: The hours were about the same like regular hours. I didn't work second shift, I worked first shift. I couldn't work second shift or anything because of transportation. I think I worked second shift, and I had somebody come over and pick me up. I think I had somebody to come and pick me up.

The second shift, they start at 2:30 [p.m.] and they pau at 10:30 [p.m.]. Yes, that's right. I forgot that I was working second shift. We start 2:30 and we get through 10:30. Somebody comes to pick me up. But I didn't work that long, that second shift.

MK: What time was first shift?

JS: First shift starts at 7:00 [a.m.] and they get through at 2:30 [p.m.]. Then we come in 2:30 and we get through at 10:30 [p.m.].

MK: When you were working, how much time beforehand would you have to prepare to go to work?

JS: Oh no, there's no preparation. All you do is get there five minutes before the whistle blow.

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

MK: Could you tell me what sort of rules and regulations you were under while you were working at Libby's?

JS: Well, the rules that I would be able to remember is to be there on time. When you starting to work, you have to be there on time before the machines start. Those breaks that we had before, it's not like the type of break that we have now. We have a specific time [nowadays]. But [at Libby's in 1935] when you go on break, you go on your own if you want to go in the bathroom or things like that. If you're a smoker, you smoke. But other than that, you don't have the regular rest periods.

When you go out on lunch you have to be back on time. That's the only rules and regulations that I could think of. Of course, you have to watch hazardous things; not to run. That's part of the regulations. Be careful that you don't get into any machinery. That is part of regulations. But other than that, nothing more.

MK: How did you know how long you could take for a break?

JS: Like I said, breaks, you got to go bathroom and smoke a cigarette or something. As soon as you're done, you're going to go back. There is no limit time. The only limit time that we have is the



lunch period. That's supposed to be half an hour.

MK: Do you remember what you were paid for this job?

JS: Gee, warehouse, I don't know. I think we were getting 20 cents an hour. Because when I went back to work at Dole, I remember we were having 20 cents an hour. It's not very long when I worked for Dole so it should be 20 cents an hour, roughly.

MK: What did you think of that pay?

JS: Oh, I thought that was lots of money. Those days, we get paid \$20 a week or \$10 a week, that was good money. We get paid by silver dollars. We don't get paid by paycheck or dollar bills; we get paid by silver dollars in the envelope. You have your name and you have the amount that is in there. I thought it was good. I really thought it was good.

MK: Did you have a bango like you mentioned, at CPC?

JS: Yes, yes, you have a bango, a number. That's how they come and take your time. You have timekeepers come around but you don't know who they are. But they come and they see your number and they check you in. Not like now, we have punch time; but those days, they have timekeepers come over there take your time that you working.

MK: Was that the same as at CPC?

JS: CPC is the same thing, right.

MK: What were your feelings about this job at Libby's?

JS: I didn't mind it; I liked it. Only I thought it was too far. Because I lived by Keeaumoku Street, [by] that experimenting station [Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association], I thought Libby was too far away. So I thought, if I could find a closer cannery to work, I would rather go to the closer cannery. But I guess I was a little on the prejudice in cannery. My intention was to get involved with Dole. At that particular time, they called them Hawaiian Pine. I think my intention was to get in Dole and stick to Dole. But because I had no choice, I started to work for Libby. I thought I'd hang on until I could get hired at Dole.

So as far as working there, I enjoyed it, I liked it. The people were nice. We made friends. I made friends. But I forgot their names already.

MK: You mentioned that you used to work night shift and sometimes day shift. Did you have a preference about that?

JS: At that time, for night shift, I didn't have no preference. I had to take it. It's either the second shift or not working at all.

I worked night all the time; I didn't work day. Because at that time, my husband was a boyfriend. He used to come and pick me up. He was my boyfriend for long time. I didn't marry him until I was age enough to marry him, but at that particular time, he used to come and pick me up. That's why I was able to work second shift. Otherwise, I wouldn't be able to, because finding your way, transportation, coming home after 10:30 [p.m.], was kind of little on the dangerous side. Even though it was way way gone, but it was kind of dangerous.

MK: Since this work in the cannery was more like warehouse work, were you uncomfortable with the noises or the surroundings?

JS: No, I wasn't.

MK: You said that you stayed at Libby's as long as you could waiting for a job at Dole. Could you explain why you wanted to go to Dole so badly?

JS: I guess it was because my mother was working there. Maybe, I think. I don't know. I wouldn't be able to pinpoint, but maybe it's because my mother was working there and I wanted to work there.

MK: Before you went to Dole, how did you leave Libby's?

JS: I just told them that I quit. That's all, I didn't tell them why, I didn't go in details. I just told them I quit, that's all.

MK: How were you notified by Dole that you had finally gotten a job there?

JS: When I wasn't working at Libby, in the morning, I'd go down to Dole to see whether they're hiring. That's how. Several times I went down they weren't hiring, but finally, then I heard that they were hiring bulks of people, workers. Then I said, "Oh, this is the chance for me to go and see. Maybe they'll hire me." They did. When they hired me, all I did was go up to Libby, saw the foreman, and told the foreman that I quit working there because I found job somewhere else.

He said, "That's all right. Thank you so much for working for us." He was a local boy. He was a Blaisdell. He was Timmy Blaisdell. He was a nice foreman.

MK: How did you get your job at Dole in that summer of 1935?

JS: The foremans come out; the supervisor or superintendent, or whoever. This one is a superintendent. That was Mr.[Marshall] Hjelte. He goes on a platform, and everybody is down below. He's up on high like that. He looks, he goes, he look, look, he scan his eyes right around. He goes like that [points to individuals in the crowd],



"You, you, you, come up." Everybody starts hustling and going up. Whoever. If you're not the right person, then he points his finger and he say, "No, not you. The other one." Then the other ones coming up. I was one of those that was selected at that particular day. I was so happy that he picked me because they had lot of different people. Was quite a bit that we had gone up. I was one of them selected at that particular time.

MK: How many days did you have to go to Dole?

JS: Gee, I think I only went that once and I got hired.

MK: Do you know why you were chosen?

JS: No. I guess one of my hands was going up like that. [Mrs. Souza raises her hand and waves frantically.]

MK: Would you have to shake your hands that frantically?

JS: Oh yes, you have to attract his attention. If you don't do that, he's not going to look over your way. He's going to keep on scanning out all different ways. Probably, he's looking for someone that he knows, somebody familiar or some friend's daughter, or whatever it is. I don't know.

MK: Why do you say that, "some friend's daughter or someone familiar?"

JS: Because the way he does it.

MK: Can you explain?

JS: Like I said, when he looks like that, and he goes like that, "You, you, you, come up." [He scans the crowd and fingers individuals-- rather than groups of people.]

To me, I think you would say, "Oh, right around here. This five will come up, or this five will come up."

He goes over there, [selects] one, two. Then he goes over there, [selects] another one over there, and he goes like that. That's why, to me, I think it's either friend, face, or whatever. Nationalities. I don't know. I know he picks quite a bit half-whites, though, because he's haole, see.

MK: Can you tell me why you became a packer?

JS: I was told packing was a little easier than trimming, physically.

MK: Who told you that?

JS: My mother because my mother was a trimmer then. Actually, trimming, you have to lift up the pineapple and it's harder for the hands to trim. Packing, you only make selections. But in the long run, I

would describe it, physically, trimming is little hard. Mentally, packing is a little hard. Packing, you use lot of judgment. I'm glad I took packing.

MK: Why?

JS: Well, it's a challenging thing. There's a lot of things that you got to know about pineapple slices. Explanation, color. Trimming, you just trim the pineapple. That's all you do is cut the skin, cut the blemishes and that's all. That's just routine, back and forth. Whereas, packing, no. [You got to know] the type of fruit that's coming out, if it's ripe or if it's green or if it's half-ripe. The quality of the fruits in grading is still the same, but sometimes, the color of the fruit puzzles the individual. But we go according to the quality of the slice. You can better yourself by improving your selection and describing the slices as a packer. Whereas, trimming, you have nothing; just all simple. You have to lift up the fruit and do all the hand work. Whereas, packing, going to discard what you're supposed to be discarding. You're going to pack what you're going to pack. They call it [packed pineapple slices] "Grade 3," "Grade 2," and "Grade 1." To me, I think that's challenging.

MK: That's why you like packing?

JS: That's why I like packing, right. I love packing.

MK: Even in that time, in 1935, you wanted to be a packer.

JS: Uh huh [yes]. All those years.

MK: How did you get the company to make you a packer [and not a trimmer]?

JS: Oh no, it's how they hire. They need packers, they're going to hire packers; they need trimmers, they going hire trimmers. That's how they hire. Like for instance, if this particular time, they hiring packers, that's all they hire, is packers. The next time, they going hire trimmers. They're going to hire nothing but trimmers. That's why, you know you're going to go in that particular department--Preparation department--but as a packer or as a trimmer.

MK: Now I understand. You told me a little bit about how you pack, but can you describe how you packed in 1935? That first summer, how did you pack pineapple?

JS: That first summer, I was a stripper. The pineapple coming out, all I do is strip the ends. That's all I did, strip the ends.

MK: Can you tell me how you strip?

JS: Yeah, those days, they used to have a stripper, a B [broken slices] packer, a choice packer and a fancy [packer]. The stripper, all she does is take the thin slice [at] the ends out.

That's all they do. Then [the sliced pineapple cylinder] goes to the next girl, she's going to pick up the ones [slices] with the gouges. She's going to put that in a B cup. That, you're going to cut in a third grade.

The next one is going to be fancy [packer]. You're going to pick that up [i.e., the fancy or grade 1 slices] and put it in the fancy trays. Then the next grade, [grade 2] that's the choice cut on top. It's a sort of the sour type. You could see the grain.

The trays are marked. The green trays are the B's, the yellow trays are the choice, and the red trays is fancy. At that time, they used to have trays. We have tray boys to carry the trays out. That's how. They stack it up.

We used to have more workers. Even on the table, we have more workers because like I had describe, they have a stripper, then they have two B packers, two choice packers, and they have fancy packers. They have quite a bit workers on the table. [See diagram section in Introduction.]

MK: Can you tell me again how many of each grade worker there was?

JS: One stripper, two B packers, and two choice packers, and four fancy packers.

MK: Was there one position that you liked more than another? Or, at that time, were you just a stripper?

JS: No, well, you learn as a stripper. You come in, if they need you as a stripper, they'll put you as a stripper. Then, if they figure that they want to train you up to be a B packer [they'll put you as a B packer]. B's the third grade--that's fruit that they cut into halves. After they cut it in half, they put it in the can, they put it on the table and they let it go down [to the end of the table]. We usually have beautiful halves, at that particular time. Although they need lot of manpower for it. They had B packers, two; and choice packers, two; and I think fancies, either two or four. I'm not sure.

But you work where they tell you to work. Like if they need you as a fancy packer, they have to show you what type of slice is fancy. Those days, they didn't have a training program; whereas, now, we have training program. We never had training program. They just come over there say, "This is what you're going to do. You're going to strip all these thin slices out." Then, pineapple [sliced pineapple cylinders] is coming down. That time, we thought the pineapple was really fast, but when you come down to think about it, it's not that fast because we had boys. We packed the fruit in the trays, the boys had to come, carry the trays, and stack it up. We had to wait until they come and pick up the trays. But sometimes, the foreladies come over there and help put the empty cans on. So that's how. If they need you as a fancy packer,

they'll put you as a fancy packer. If they need you as a B packer, they'll put you as a B packer. Those methods, at that time.

Right now, when they hire you and they train you, you have to learn everything. You have to know the whole cylinder, what to do with the whole cylinder.

MK: At that time, how were you trained?

JS: You go on the table, the forelady or the reliever [trains you]. The reliever is the one that takes your place whenever you have to go to the bathroom. But actually, it's the forelady that shows you what to do, off the table. We used to have foreladies on the packing side, foreladies on the trimming side. So they have time enough to go and train the workers, what and what they're supposed to be looking for. But as far as training program, we didn't have that training program.

MK: About how much time did she spend with you, training?

JS: Not too long. I would say about 10, 15 minutes. That's all. Now, the only thing is, if you don't know what you're doing, it's up to you to ask. You, the individual. Sometimes, they take it for granted, "Oh, you doing fine." I think they should ask if they don't know what they're doing--if they cannot determine which is the choice or they can't determine which is the B's. At that time, the ones with one gouge, we used to call that B's. The slice of choice, how to determine whether that is a slice of choice. The fancy, to show them the difference between the fancy and the choice. The forelady's work is, with the help of her reliever, to show the individual what and what they're supposed to be looking for.

MK: When you didn't know how to do something or you were unsure, did you ask?

JS: I did. But then, the first work that I did was so simple that I don't really have to ask. But then, afterwards, as they elevate you to different type of packer, they have to describe the slice. Why is it fancy? Or, why is it choice? In able for the individual [to pack].

You see, the pineapple comes down one way. The butt is down, the choice is up so they're going to tell you, "The one up here is going to be choice. The first slice you pick up, you're going to put for B's, the two slice you pick up is going to be for choice, and the rest of the slices going down, that goes on to the red tray [i.e., the fancy tray]."

Some people cannot. They get confused, because sometimes the cylinder comes different ways. You have to show them the slice facing to you, in able to determine which is the fancy, which is the choice. Like the B's is easy to tell; that's the one with the knife, when you plucking, taking out the eyes or blemishes, that's

one nice little gouge, they call it B's. We line it all up and then we put it in the can and it goes down. They take that can and they put it on the tray. They put it on the tray, they take it out, they stack it, and they take it to the girls. The girls with a cutter, and they cut it. So, it used to come out beautiful slices. But they did away with it. Evidently, they not making money with it.

MK: It seems that being a packer involves a whole lot of judgment and it takes a whole lot of skill. What if you were having problems, that you're not a very good packer? What happens at the table, then?

JS: Oh, well, they have to spend more time with you. The supervisors have to spend more time with you. The foreladies have to spend more time with you. They do, we do have people that is much slower than the other. We have people that is fast, we have people that is slow. The forelady, that's her job. She has to spend more time with you, and probably explain to you a little slower maybe, if you can't understand her.

MK: If the person next to you is having some problem packing, what do you do as a worker?

JS: Well, if I could help the person, I'll help the person. We do have people kind of confused, and they say, "Oh, is this fancy?" Or, "Is this choice?"

Like us, as you get used to to it, you're able to determine so you look over, say, "Oh, that's choice."

But when they showing the people, the instructors, the foreladies telling the people which is which, they have to pick the whole cylinder up to show them the working procedures. The strippers going to strip the two thin slice; and then, the bottom slice, that's always fancy. But you have some trim [i.e., imperfect slices] on that side, too. So you have to pick that up and let it go. It goes down at the end of the table because we have a cutter down there.

Then, the top one, you take out the thin slice and the reject [i.e., the slice that falls below choice standards], you let it go down on the belt. There, you show the choice. There, you just show them maybe one slice or two slice, it's choice. Then you pick it up and you throw it down. But you don't pick up the whole thing; you pick it up like this.

MK: So that was how you were taught to pack, and that's how you packed in 1935?

JS: Yes, right. In 1935, actually, the people has to be on their own. They'll instruct them but they don't spend as much time with them. So you have to be on your own. In other words, you try to do the

best you can in selecting your slices--whatever position you working.

MK: Was there a checking up system?

JS: Yes, they check on the cans. The forelady's work is to check on the cans. [To check] the packer that is packing that particular tray, she's going to check on the individual cans. Spot check, in other words, to see that she's putting the right slice in the right tray, to see that she don't have fancy in the choice tray. Fancy should be on the red tray.

MK: What would happen if a forelady found that you made a mistake; what happens at that time?

JS: Well, all she does is try to correct you, and show you your error. I mean, at that time, you're going to be able to determine the slices. When you look at it, you know you made a mistake. All you do is accept. Some people accepts correction, but some don't.

MK: How were you, at that time?

JS: Oh, I accept my corrections; I do. I accept correction quite a bit.

MK: When you were a packer, what hours were you working?

JS: When I first started to work there, I worked nighttime. I start from 7 o'clock in the evening, if it's an all night thing, to 6 o'clock in the morning. Yeah, that's a long hours. But then, sometimes they break it up. They make it 2:30 [p.m.] to 10:30 [p.m.] in the night. So it varies, the time. It varies, but the first shift, they work from 7 o'clock [a.m.] to about 2:30 or 3:00 [p.m.]. Then the second shift comes in 2:30 to about 10:30 [p.m.]. There are times that they have three shifts. That comes in 10:30 [p.m.] to 6:00 in the morning.

MK: That was in 1935?

JS: Yeah, 1935, they had the three shifts also. But I remember more on the 7 o'clock in the evening to 6 o'clock [a.m.]. Only when they very busy, that's when we have the 7 o'clock to 6 o'clock. But the most hours that we work is 2:30 [p.m.] to 10:00 or 10:30 [p.m.]; sometimes 11:00 [p.m.].

MK: Why did you work night shift?

JS: I don't know. Maybe because I feel I like it better. I didn't have to get up early in the morning to go to work. Whereas, the other time you have to get up early and go to work. This one here, you could get up late, go to work and come back. I was with my stepmother, too, and I liked to do some of my home chores while I'm home, and then go to work.



MK: At that time, were you a seasonal, that summer?

JS: Seasonal, right. Then, they lay off. School time, they lay off. Then they hire again. But then, that way [i.e., having worked one season], we have cards. We're experienced so we have cards. They send the cards to us so that's no problem. We're going to be hired anyway. But the first time is going to be hard.

MK: So you mean the first time it's hard to get a job?

JS: Well, the first time, to me, I think was harder to get in the cannery. But after you work there, then they consider you as an experienced person. They punch the card. We have a little white card and they punch on it--stating that you worked there and what you were doing.

MK: What do you do with the card?

JS: They send it to you to tell you to come in, that they're going to hire you. Then you come in. Of course, when you come in, you don't have to be worrying about putting your hands up or anything; automatically, you come in, you're a hired worker.

MK: By working that one summer...

JS: It's easier, yeah, right. After that, you come back, you considered as an experienced worker. They rather hire you as an experienced worker than hire somebody that doesn't know how to work. They get to hire the experienced people, then they hire brand new ones after that.

MK: Going back to the working situation itself, in 1935, that summer, what do you remember about your breaks and your lunch?

JS: Okay, I don't think we had breaks and lunch. I remember, every time you want to take a little break you just say you want to go use the bathroom. You go to the bathroom. That's the only way you can have breaks. I don't even remember whether we had break over there, at Dole, at that time. But like us, we were young. People that smokes can go upstairs and sit down and smoke cigarette.

MK: Where do you mean, "upstairs?"

JS: To the bathroom. See, there's bathrooms situated in the cannery. So many tables can go to one bathroom, and so many tables go to the other bathroom. At least if you want a little break, you want to rest, the only thing you can do is smoke a cigarette and sit in the toilet. That's the only time you can rest a little. I tried to do that so that I can sit up there. But I couldn't stand the tobacco taste, so I had to give it up.

MK: (Laughs) Why didn't you eat something or do something else during your break?

JS: Not in the toilet room.

(Laughter)

JS: That's all toilets in there. But I don't even remember whether we had breaks at that time.

MK: How much time would you take, when you went to go to the bathroom and smoke?

JS: Well, gee, I don't think it's too much of a time because it's short. Unless you have to go to the locker room, like if you have your period and you have to go to the locker room. I don't think they had any sanitary thing down at the toilet room [downstairs]. But we would say, "Oh, we want to go to the locker room," because it's a longer walk. It'll take you more time walking, going to the regular main locker room and change your sanitary napkin. Whereas, but when you say you want to go use the bathroom, you want to go pass urine, you have to go right over there [downstairs--near the packing and trimming area]. You cannot take a long walk. They won't let you take a long walk.

MK: So it was only when you had your period that you could go up to that other bathroom?

JS: To the main locker room, yeah.

MK: Since you mentioned periods, did you have any problems when you had your period?

JS: No, I didn't have problems.

MK: Did you have problems staying at the table, or...

JS: No.

MK: Going back a little bit, you mentioned lunch. Where did you have your lunch?

JS: We had cafeteria. You can go to the cafeteria and buy lunch. Those days, the lunch was really good, was run by good people. Of course, was cheap. I think I bought my lunch most of the time, from the cafeteria.

MK: You said your lunch was good; what do you mean by "good?"

JS: They really had good menus and enjoyable lunch for people like us. You know, [it was food] we so used to with--maybe like stew and maybe pork chops and what do you call that....chicken, and things like that. They have, sometimes, Chinese pork with vegetables. It was something that we enjoyed eating.

MK: You said the prices were cheap...



JS: It was pretty reasonable. Gee, I don't know, I can't think of how much it was. Was it 35 cents? It was cheap, really cheap.

MK: You mentioned your locker rooms; what did you keep in your locker rooms besides your sanitary pads?

JS: Well, we have our aprons. There at Dole, you purchase your apron, you have to wash your own apron. They don't have laundry for you. Your hat, too; your cap. In other words, you have to have your cap and all your hair in your cap. The aprons that we had was cotton aprons. You wash and iron your own aprons. But it has to be clean and ironed. If it looks wrinkled, they'll tell you that your apron needs ironing so don't bring a wrinkled apron because it doesn't look for a food preparation area. So that's what we all tell them, "Wash your apron clean." Some of them lazy wash. We have to wash our own aprons.

MK: Who will check your apron?

JS: Well, when you working, your appearance shows, whether it's wrinkled, dirty, or anything. The forelady will tell you. Your apron or your hat is dirty, you have to have it washed or go buy yourself another cap, another apron. We buy our own apron and our caps.

MK: How much were they?

JS: Gee, I cannot remember.

MK: You were saying that you wore your cap differently at the different canneries.

JS: No, what I mean is you have a cap; now when you have a cap, and you're at a food preparation, the cap is to keep your hair all in. So all the hair, even the one down here [the nape] should be in the cap. Libby, I don't know how they put their cap on. I don't know whether it's all in. But I know CPC, when that particular time, I had gone to work for CPC, they just pick up their hat and just go "plunk" on their head. They don't have to put all this hair in. See, that's what I mean. Dole, no, they're very strict; they want all the hair in.

MK: At that time, at 1935, was Dole requiring shoes?

JS: No, slippers. You could still wear slippers.

MK: You would have to wear gloves and aprons and caps; were you comfortable working at the cannery?

JS: Yeah, right.

MK: How about sitting or standing; what did you do?

JS: We have chairs to sit if you're tired. On the table where you

working, they always have chairs. Trimmers and packing side, if you're tired you can sit down. After, when you know you have rest you can stand up. But if you're slow, you're not keeping up with your fruit, uh uh, the forelady's going to tell you, "Stand up." You have to be able to keep up with your fruit in able to sit down. To trim is the same thing; to pack is the same thing. Keep up with your pineapple. When a [pineapple] cylinder is coming down, the ones are up [i.e., the girls at the beginning of the table] is trying to hurry up and pick as fast as they can so they don't have too many extras go down. If you're not picking up as much as you should, the forelady's going to tell you, "You're not picking up fast enough, so start picking up faster now." That's what I mean. If you're slow sitting down, they're going to tell you to stand up.

MK: Is it harder to do the work sitting down?

JS: Well, if you're good at it, it doesn't matter. You can sit and keep up. But if you're not good at it, you're learning, you don't sit. I don't sit, I stand.

MK: Were there hard things connected with packing? Did you consider some things hard or difficult, at that time?

JS: No, I don't think so. I used to think being a fancy packer was kind of hard.

MK: Why?

JS: I guess by selecting the slices. I think that's what it is. What I was doing, I like that--stripping and pack B's. I liked that; it was easy because you see it right there and it has a hole and it says, well, that's for B's. Thin slice, you throw away. But the other rest, you have to determine the slice. If you're going to be a choice packer, you're going to pick up the choice. The fancy, you got to make sure that you don't have choice in the fancy. Dole's standards, consumer standards--they didn't call it consumer standards, but their quality was the highest in standards. Dole was packing quality, not quantity. [See diagram section in Introduction.]

MK: Why do you say that? How do you know?

JS: You see, like quality, they got to have good fancy. That's what they call quality. The borderline fancy doesn't go into the fancy, it goes in the choice. That's what I mean by quality. They used to go by quality, not quantity. Quantity, the borderline fancy, they put 'em in the fancy because they're going to make money with that. But their standards was Dole packed the best pineapple, the best fancy. That was considered the number one. So they claim Dole packed the best fancy. I thought they were because according to my experience as working, became a forelady, I thought they were. They really did.

MK: How about in that 1935 summer; did you consider it quality?

JS: Well, that time, I was new so I don't think I should be the one to say the quality would be good. All I did was stripping. I knew nothing about the rest of the packs.

MK: So it was only later?

JS: Yeah, later, as I got to be working more and more. Then after I was there for about four or five years, then it dawned on me that the reputation of Dole was quality, not quantity.

MK: Did you take pride in that?

JS: Yes, I did. Working for Dole, I thought that was really good. Like for instance, if you're checking on a can and you find a slice in there that don't look like a fancy, we taking it out and we telling them, "Put 'em in the choice." So anyway, as I was getting more experience, became a reliever and became a forelady, I was kind of proud of Dole because their quality was really good.

Why I mentioned a little while ago about the quality and the quantity, is because now [the emphasis] is [on] quantity. The quality is borderline.

MK: If you had to make a choice, would you say that in the beginning, there was more emphasis on judgment than now?

JS: Well, at that time, judgment of course, really counts. Now, judgment really counts also. But there is a borderline of selecting the slices. You could understand the situation now, then the situation that time. At that time, the wages weren't the thing. The company is making enough money. But now, the company has to make money to pay wages. [It's] just like when you buy a can of peaches. They have consumer's allowance in the can of peaches. Maybe they have a blemish or something. Dole pineapple is the same thing. If this particular can is supposed to be a fancy, you find one slice of choice in there, it's not downgraded. It's acceptable for the fancy grade. That's what I mean by quantity. In able to make money, they have to go beyond the borderline of the choice. You pick up that particular slice, one side look like fancy, the other side look like choice--and we do come across slices like that [nowadays]--we'll put it in fancy because fancy making the money.

MK: That is what you do nowadays?

JS: Now, right.

MK: Would you do the same thing back in 1935?

JS: Those days, no. No, no. It has to be fancy fancy, perfect fancy [said with emphasis]. That's what I mean by quality. At that time, quality was the thing. But now, they go according to consumer's allowance. If the consumers bypassing this particular slice and

says this is passable for fancy, we'll put it in for fancy. For one thing, it's because the company is going to make money. We had this thing, that opens [cans] cut-up, they call it. [With it] they see what are we packing in the individual can grade--the fancy, the choice. We don't have B's now, but we have tidbits and chunks. We have that [inspection of cans] to show that we doing all right. We're not going beyond, we're not going over-board or less. Now is the thing to make the money because wages are so high.

END OF SIDE TWO

SIDE ONE: Tape No. 6-6-1-79

MK: Tape Two of interview with Julia Souza on February 27.

Mrs. Souza, we're still talking about your experiences at Dole at 1935, and you mentioned some regulations about clothing and about how much time you take for breaks and things. Do you remember any other rules or regulations that you had to be under that summer of 1935?

JS: One thing, like I said, is hat and apron, and gloves. If I'm not mistaken you have to go to dispensary take a physical. We have to go and take this physical to see whether you're pregnant, or you have sores. Take your eye test and take hearing test. I think that's what we used to do, I mean, that's required.

MK: Was that before you were hired?

JS: Right after you're hired. They hire you and that's what you do. You go to the dispensary and they give you a check. When the dispensary okay you--you not pregnant or sores, or whatever it is--then you go to the preparation office. Then they know they accepted you.

MK: Did every girl have to check if she was pregnant or not?

JS: Yes, they have to. I think they had such thing of being afraid that you are pregnant to make sure that you're not going to hurt yourself. Like maybe sores, too. Skin disease and stuff like that is what the dispensary is there for. But maybe they weren't as strict as it is now. Now, it's much more stricter.

MK: Were there any other rules that told you how to act in the cannery?

JS: No. No way of acting; same way, local. The way you are.

(MK laughs)

JS: Local. Nothing different.

MK: How were your relations with your co-workers, with other packers?

JS: Very good. Too friendly, I think.

MK: Can you explain?

JS: We have picnics together. We have parties together. Every time there's something coming up, we're always as a group. We have a group that's very very close. Foreladies, head foreladies. That included Louise Koike, tray boys, sub-lunas. Every time there's a party--well, I guess because we were young. They have dances. When we have dances we get a group, we go out. That's what I mean, as close friends.

MK: You mean that the head foreladies and foreladies were also included?

JS: They go to the picnics especially. Like moonlight picnics and [the other] picnics and parties that we have. Cannery parties, like that; we ask them to go, they go.

MK: How did you organize these things?

JS: Well, we have one particular person. They're the Bright girls. They used to work for Dole. One is Alice Bright, one is Lei Bright. They're the coordinator. When they start something, then words go pass. "Oh, we're going to have a moonlight picnic." Most of this young generation, at that time, when I was young, I joined that. We go to the picnic, we go to Hanauma, down at the country, down Punaluu and all that. Then they have a little party, like a get-together party. Not too much going to nightclubs like they have now. But it's a little party, maybe at a park. Everybody bring their food and we'd eat at the park. That's the kind of party we used to have. Naturally the friends are all close together. Friends only when we're at the cannery, but they're all nice people. Respectful, and things like that. Boys and girls together. Was really nice.

MK: At the cannery, did you folks have time to talk and do things together during work time?

JS: Oh yes. Fool around. Young kids, I'm telling you, fool around. You supposed to be doing your work, you looking up, you talking and everything. But soon as you see the forelady, you put your head down and try to do your job. Trying to cheat any way, you know. Because young, you young so naturally, you see boys, you want to talk to the boys. That's young blood.

(Laughter)

JS: Was really fun, though. You can talk to people. The pineapple wasn't as fast so you have time to talk. They come over there, they stand, they talk to you. Girls come, foreladies talking to you. In the front we have stories, what was this going on and all

that. So really, it was enjoyable work, though. I liked the cannery working.

MK: You talk at the tables?

JS: Yeah, at the tables we're able to talk; doing your work. The hands moving, the mouth moving; yeah, at the table.

MK: How about the rest breaks or the lunch breaks?

JS: Well, we always have to rush because you have limited time; especially the lunch. We have whistle blowing so we go straight to lunch. The first whistle blow, that mean time to go down. We don't watch the clock or what, we just listen to whistle. As soon as the first whistle blow you're going to go because as soon as that second whistle blow, pineapples coming down [onto the tables], so you have to be on the table to work.

MK: What happens if you're not there?

JS: They're going to ask you. If it was an emergency, well, they'll accept that. But if it's not an emergency---I mean, you can always find all kind excuse why you late; you had sore stomach in the bathroom. Well, there's nothing they can do about it but they can warn you and tell you, "Oh, be down on time next time." The first whistle is for you to prepare to come down. But be down on time. That's all we need for---if you're the type that accepts explanation and you explain it and then accept the correction, it's okay. You get along like that.

MK: How many warnings would you get before you get into trouble?

JS: That part, I wouldn't know because I wouldn't even wait until I get so many warnings. One warning is plenty enough for me. Young, too, worse yet, you know. You get kind of scary. You don't want to be ornery. You want to abide by the rules and the regulations. I guess maybe that's why I made lot of friends. I'm not the type that buck against the individual; I always try to go with them.

MK: You were saying that you would get together with your cannery friends. Those seemed like informal activities that you folks planned, yeah?

JS: Right.

MK: How about company activities? I've heard of some company-sponsored ones.

JS: Yeah, you see, like for instance, if there's company-sponsored thing, it's not exactly sponsored by the company. But the individual is going to go on a picnic, for instance; the company furnishes the truck. We used to really enjoy that. You go on a pineapple truck. Big gang on the pineapple truck. Sometimes we



have about two or three trucks full of people. Mixed, boys and girls. They have music and watermelon and soda water, and all those things.

We used to go down Hanauma Bay. You just can imagine walking down Hanauma Bay with that pan of ice and soda and watermelon. But we were young, we could do that. We walk down and have a grand time. Overnight--usually we have moonlight picnics, and we stay overnight. The next morning, Sunday morning early everybody go home. The truck goes and drop us down at the cannery. From there, we find our way home. We have to go down there to be picked up; they not going to go to individual's house to pick you up. You go down there. They tell you what time to be there, the truck will be there, and you be there. Then you go to whatever picnics that you going to go to. But usually, it's about the end of the year, almost at summertime. Before the school kids go back to school, the latter part of August, then they start preparing all these things.

At that time, they used to have Lau Yee Chai chop suey house. They used to go Lau Yee Chai chop suey. They used to go Wo Fat chop suey house. Where else that we used to go? Most of the time was chop suey house that they have cannery party. Lau Yee Chai, we go for our dinner over there and they used to have ballroom dancing. All those time, we go with boys and girls that all dance. We stay and we enjoy ourself after the meal. That was one of the places that we always did go; Lau Yee Chai. Another place used to be Waialae Clubhouse. Of course, then, Nuuanu "Y" was only dance. We used to go to those. But those are all cannery group that we get together and we go. That was one of the recreation that we had before.

Of course, they used to have lot of dances going on. Like Palama Gym, University of Hawaii, and where else, now, that I used to go? Waialae.

MK: Were those activities really important in your social life?

JS: No, no, that wasn't. It's just that it's a function, that being young, you want to get involved and so you go.

MK: Were most of the functions that you went to at that age cannery functions?

JS: Most of them. The people is more from the cannery. Not all the functions, but the people is from the cannery. Like boys going to go to the dances and one group of girls--there's about four or five of us, we get together. Then we go to the dances, wherever they're holding the dance. Maybe Palama Gym or Waialae Clubhouse, or University. University used to have lot of dances, before. They used to have the Farmer's Dance. You go with overalls and things like that. They used to have those several places that the young people can go to the dance. It was really nice.

The young people used to respect each other. We used to have a group that used to go together. At that time, my husband, I was going to go with him but he doesn't dance. So we go with boys from the cannery that knows how to dance and the girls that know how to dance. What we do is we get together, we go pick them up and take us to the dance. Then I tell my husband, "Go down Kewalo Basin and wait for me." When we're ready to go home I give him a call there. Then he comes up and pick us up and take everybody home.

I mean, the boys and girls, they respected each other. They didn't go, "Oh, because you're going to go to the dance, that's my boyfriend." You know? That was not the way we were in our group. That was really nice. Then, as we get older, we get involved with boyfriends, each one married somebody else. I married my husband. My friends married somebody else that we never saw before. The boys married somebody else that didn't go in our group. That's how it was; really nice.

MK: You were saying that during those times that you really respected each other; how about your relations with the foreladies? Did you treat them differently from how kids treat you nowadays?

X JS: No. The foreladies were real friendly. They were really nice. We had some sour foreladies but we wouldn't go on their table. We stayed away from them.

MK: Did you have a choice?

JS: Yeah, at times. You see, what we do is when we're walking down looking for a table, the forelady is looking for people to put on her table. If she sees you, she's going to try and hail you to the table. So you get to go to the same table all the time. You have the same forelady all the time.

MK: Would you have to go early?

JS: No, you don't have to. Not exactly early. But as long as you get down there on time you have tables to go on. But if you're going to be late, you not going have tables. So you're going to go on the table that they're going to put you on. That's when you're going to be put on the really sour foreladies. I mean, they're not very friendly, but they're doing their job anyway.

MK: Can you tell me something about these not too friendly foreladies?

JS: Oh well, (Laughs) the thing I can't remember too much because I don't get to go on their table. But the other girls, they say, "If you go on so-and-so's table, hoo, she's wild, you know. She's wild beast. She's not friendly. When she scold you, she scold you terribly." But I don't have the evidence to prove that they are that bad. It's just hearsay from other people.

MK: In a preliminary interview you were telling me that if you were a



senior forelady sometimes you get to pick the ones that you want. So in 1935, was it the same way?

JS: No. 1935, no, it wasn't the same way. It's just as the people come down we just put them on the table, whatever table. But like I said, foreladies, they smart. They know who is the good workers. That's when they start looking for workers that's coming down. They need maybe two or three, then they going say, "Come, I have room on the table." You could do that, at that particular time. But now we have assigned tables.

MK: That's how it's changed.

JS: Yeah, changed. Now you cannot pick the tables that you want to. You may pick the tables you want but providing they don't have workers on the table. See, if they have workers on the table, you can't stick your body in there. You have to go and see a table that needs girls.

MK: When you look back on this 1935 period, you seem to have enjoyed it.

JS: Oh yeah.

MK: Can you expand on your feelings about that job? What did you think about that job that summer?

JS: Gee, I don't know. It's working with people, lots of people. You're not working by yourself. You working with lot of people and you get to meet different people. I think that's the main thing with pineapple working. You're not working at a place that just you at your desk, or just you and whatever you're doing. You're having different people coming around. You're getting to converse with them and experience on what and what they're getting into. I think that's the difference of the cannery workers.

MK: During that first summer did you ever feel like you wanted to quit? Were you ever discouraged?

JS: No, I liked it. I liked it because evidently, the people that I worked with was nice. So they didn't discourage me, in other words. Usually, people discourage people. But they didn't discourage me, they gave me lot of confidence. Maybe that's why I was happy working there although I was brand new. In 1935, I was brand new, very rookie so I didn't get involved too much. I was just doing my work and go home and stuff like that. Go to work and go home. Just do the necessary things.

MK: You said that they gave you the confidence; how did they give you confidence?

JS: I guess because they try to help you. Whenever you kind of confused with your work or whatever, and you asking them. The funny

part is it's the way the people come to you. There's a feeling that you can say, "This person is really smooth," or, "This person is really bumpy." I don't know, it's my feeling that the people that I worked with was really nice so I enjoyed my working. So it didn't discourage me at all.

MK: After you worked during that 1935 summer, you continued working as a packer. Then, in 1937 you became a reliever. During our next interview can we continue to talk about your reliever time?

JS: Sure, okay.

END OF INTERVIEW

Tape No. 6-15-2-79

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Julia Souza (JS)

March 8, 1979

Kuliouou, Oahu

BY: Michiko Kodama (MK)

MK: Interview with Mrs. Julia Souza on March 8, 1979 at her home in Kuliouou.

Okay, Mrs. Souza, I'm going to continue today's interview with your 1937 experience, okay.

JS: Okay.

MK: You said you became a reliever in 1937?

JS: Yes.

MK: Can you tell me how you became a reliever?

JS: They needed relievers and I been working previous to that and they decided that I would make a good reliever. They asked me if I wanted to learn to become a reliever. I said, "Yes," because you get little bit more pay. They accepted me to become a reliever. A reliever's position is to help the forelady.

MK: Can you tell me why they thought you would make a good reliever?

JS: Oh, I have no idea. Maybe the way I speak or maybe it's the patience that I have. Maybe that's how they selected me. I really don't know unless they were just being nice, you know. Or, they needed someone because they do make quite a bit of people--I'm not the only one--there's several others selected.

In other words, they screen individuals and then they ask them that they want them to become a reliever. We say okay and they tell us what our duties are and we just accept it, that's all. I thought it would be an honor to be a reliever--you being promoted, see. Being young, too, I figure that's good [said with emphasis]. Probably I can feel that I'm doing a good job--that's why they asking me to become a reliever.

MK: You were saying that they probably screen you. Can you sort of elaborate on that? How were they screening you?

JS: Well, you see the thing is how you perform your work. If you do your work right and you not fooling around or anything I think that's the way they select the people because they know they could rely on you.

MK: Are the foreladies sending in reports on your performance to the higher up people?

JS: Nineteen thirty-five, I didn't think they evaluate the people. It's just that the supervisors above come around and observe you, not taking no word from anybody. In other words, their decision is what they make. That's what they push for the individual.

MK: Which supervisors make the decision to ask you to be the reliever?

JS: That would be the head forelady and the head forelady at that particular time was Mabel Kozuki. She was our head but the top head was Mary Kunani. So evidently when Mary Kunani comes down the tables, she walks outside all the way down to the end of the table. In the meantime she's observing and you as a worker you don't know that they're observing you. She goes back to the office and there she writes out her decision. Then she passes it on to her assistant, that's Mabel Kozuki. Then they tell us, "Oh wait, we need you to be a reliever."

I say, "Oh, sure, fine." You know, no refusing.

MK: How often would that Mary Kunani be observing?

JS: Oh, she goes around about twice a day, I think.

MK: Twice a day. How about Mabel Kozuki?

JS: Oh, she's on the table, she's on the floor continuously. She doesn't go in the office. Mary Kunani stays in the office but Mabel is on the floor all the time.

MK: You were saying that you would get a little bit more pay. How much more pay than the regular time?

JS: Gee, I wouldn't be able to state the prices, I mean the wages at that time.

MK: But it was a little bit more?

JS: A little bit more, yes, a little more.

MK: You were saying that it was an honor and you didn't refuse. Did women at that time ever refuse to be a reliever?

JS: None that I know of. I guess because they feel they're being asked to be promoted. They said, "Oh, well, that's good. I must be doing good--that's why they asked me to be a reliever or forelady, whatever."

MK: Can you describe the job you did in 1937 as a reliever?

JS: As a reliever, our duty was to help the forelady. If there's anybody that's going to the dispensary or go to the glove room or go to the restroom, relievers take their place and do their work [as] maybe a B packer, stripper, whatever. We take their place and we work there. If there's nobody going out then we help the foreladies check the cans to see that there's no error in the cans. The forelady does the same too. We come across some of the workers that don't understand their work. I, as a reliever goes in and helps teach them. If I cannot, then the forelady takes over.

MK: How do you know that they're not doing the work right, just by looking at the cans or do you walk around the table and watch?

JS: Actually we walk around to watch. If we can see that they're kind of puzzling or little slower in selecting their pieces, then we ask them if they need help. If they say they don't understand this and they don't understand that, then I do the honor in teaching them.

MK: As a reliever, what were the most common problems you would see on the table?

JS: I think the judgment of their slices and the discarding of the rejects. They throw away some slices that should be packed in cans. That's about it.

MK: Did one position have more problems than another position?

JS: No, I don't think so. But it's just by watching the workers, you could tell if they needed help. Probably they not keeping up with their pineapple as fast as they should so you know that the person is puzzled in her selection.

MK: When they were puzzled, what sort of things would you say to the person and how would that person react? How did they react to you in 1937?

JS: Oh, sometimes they don't like the idea of being corrected. Some of them, they don't want to be corrected. But I guess they just figure that they need the work badly so they decide to listen to whatever we tell them, whatever mistakes that they have. Now, for instance, if they're packing the fancy and they have choice in the fancy or trim [i.e., imperfect slices] in the fancy or gouge in the fancy, if we correct them, they're able to see and they're able to know that is an error so they don't say anything. Some of them say, "I'm sorry." Some of them say, "Oh, I didn't mean to." Some of them they just don't say anything.

MK: In other interviews, I've heard that sometimes people yell in the cannery in correcting a person. Did you ever experience yelling or anger?

JS: Yes I do at times. As far as anger, no. Now we have a lot of noise in the cannery [due to the automated can conveyers and other machinery] but in 1937 we had tray boys. The noise wasn't as noisy as it is now so it wasn't necessary to really yell at the people. But some supervisors, [foreladies], relievers get very uptight. They get angry fast; they don't have patience. It's not necessary to yell at that particular time because the noise wasn't as much as it is now.

MK: In 1937 when people went for their breaks or whatever and you had to take over, what would happen if a person came in a little late or took a little bit more time than she was supposed to have taken, what would you do back then?

JS: Then, the forelady is the one is observing the individual that's going out. She is the one to go up to the person and say, "How come it took you a little longer than some of the other girls wherever you went." Then she [the girl] will explain herself to the forelady. It's up to the forelady, she accepts that explanation.

If not, then she'll call the head supervisor, not the head forelady, but the section head--we call them "section heads"--and tell them about it. Or, they [foreladies] take her on the side and say, "The next time you go out, make sure you get back on time because we timed you as you go out. You should be back on the table by a certain time." Then the forelady may give her a chance, a warning in other words, and ask her not to do that again. If so [i.e., the girl is tardy again], she'll be turned in to the head forelady.

MK: You just said that the forelady would time the girl. In 1937, how much time did a girl have to do things?

JS: Well, at that time, it's no specific time but the forelady would use her judgment by seeing. She knows I'm on the table then. Maybe later on she looked back and see the girl didn't come back yet so then she knows that the girl is taking a little too long. Other girls would want to go out, too, so we have to set a time for them, tell them don't take that long. It's not that they have to be back within 15 minutes.... There are times that they take a little longer. The only thing is we don't want them to take advantage. So the forelady has to tell them, "Look, don't take advantage when you go out, you come back in time because there's others that want to go out also."

MK: How often did girls at that time go off the table, say, in an hour?

JS: Not as often, though.

MK: Could you approximate how many times a girl would go off the table? How many girls would leave the table in one day?



JS: Sometimes only one or two would leave the table especially when it's necessary like when they have their period, when they want to go to the bathroom or they have pine burn. So not that much but that depends. It's not every day the same thing. Maybe about two or three [girls] this morning and then three or four in the afternoon. That would depend on whatever the girls need to go out for.

MK: So at that time the bulk of the work of a reliever was to help the forelady?

JS: Well, that's why they call the reliever a reliever more so to relieve the person that's leaving the table. There's going to have a less worker every time one person go out so the reliever gets into the table and works. That way, it's not a less person.

MK: Did you spend more time relieving someone than checking on their work or was it the other way around?

JS: Even, I think. Sometimes nobody goes out, then I help the forelady check, watch the discard, watch the blemishes. But, then if they go out, then I'm on the table working but it's about even. There's no, nothing more than the other.

MK: How did you learn to be a reliever?

JS: I guess just came natural.

MK: Natural. (Laughs).

JS: Yeah, it just came natural. I mean, all they tell you is you're going to be a reliever and your duties is to help the forelady, check the cans, and whatever the mistakes the girls make, correct their mistakes. When they want to go out necessarily, then you take their place. So, no big deal.

MK: Who told you all that?

JS: Mabel Kozuki [head forelady]. They have to tell you the duties otherwise you'll never know what you're going to do. It's the head forelady's job to tell the individual what's what, even to the foreladies. They're the top; it's their responsibility to tell the individual what are their duties.

MK: What does the forelady tell you if she tells you anything?

JS: Oh yes. Because each individual girl has her own tray the forelady know who is making the mistake. If she's inspecting this particular girl, her cans, whatever pack it is--B's, choice or fancy--and she knows that the girl is putting more errors in her tray then the forelady doesn't stay there [beside the girl] too long. She'll just check, periodic check. She goes to the next girl. Then she comes [to the reliever] and says, "Oh, go and check that so-and-so number girl's tray; I found quite a bit of

mistakes in there. Follow up and see if she has that many mistakes again."

Then we go and follow up. After that, I would let the forelady know that she had so many errors.

The forelady says, "Gee, I wonder what's wrong with her." Then she'll go over there and talk to her. But at times we have some sassy foreladies and some girls get all frustrated. I guess [because of] the way they approach the individual, the way they teach the individual they [the girls] get hurt and some of them cry. But, some of them, they just hurt very easily. But, some of them just take the correction.

MK: When you had a sassy forelady and maybe a girl cried on your table, what did you do?

JS: Well, I can't do anything because the forelady is the top lady. I cannot even go over there and tell her, "Oh, you not supposed to do this and that." So now it's the girl's place to go and tell the head forelady. That's her place.

I cannot go and tell the forelady that she shouldn't do that because then the forelady is going to get angry with me and say, "You want to wear the blue cap." [Foreladies wear blue caps.]

MK: So you are directly responsible to---You were directly responsible to the forelady or were you...

JS: Well, the forelady is responsible for me. I'm below her. I'm her assistant. She is the top. So whatever---How the table is running that depends on her running it.

MK: If you didn't like something that the forelady did, what could you do back then in 1937?

JS: I couldn't do anything unless it's something that is going to stir up real bad then I have to tell the head forelady. I cannot tell the forelady what and what to do. What I don't like to do is interfere with the forelady. I never did. I always try to remain my own. Whatever the table need to be corrected, the forelady's responsibility. She's going to be the one that gets the credit. I'm not going to get the credit. So she's the forelady, she's going to be the one to get the credit.

So what I usually do if the girl feels very sad or hurt, I always tell her, "Be patient. Accept the correction if it's a correction that making you feel bad. Or, if you feel that she's not telling you the way that she should, then you go and tell the head forelady because that's her place to tell the forelady to cool it a little, not to be too harsh." People has feelings.

MK: So back then if a trimmer or yourself or even the forelady had some complaint the person they would see would be who?

JS: The head forelady. Either that or go to the office and see Mary Kunani.

MK: Back then were there any sort of incidents that caused that kind of action?

JS: No. None that I could remember.

MK: As a reliever, what kind of hours did you have?

JS: Cannery hours, the regular hours that we worked, if we worked, seven hours, eight hours. Sometimes we have 11 [hours], that 7 o'clock [a.m.] to 7 o'clock [p.m.]. We used to have the long hours. Then they used to break it down.

MK: When you became a reliever, you were still considered an intermittent or seasonal or...

JS: I was an intermittent. But at that time they didn't call you intermittent, they usually say all-year-round workers or something like that.

MK: That was the term they used?

JS: Yes, I think so. I think that's what it is. I don't even remember what they used to call us. I don't think it was intermittent at that time. I think what they would call us [was] all-year-round worker, that's what it was.

MK: At that time, what did they call what you now call the regular workers?

JS: Just plain packers or trimmers. You mean all-year-round workers, you mean the kind that work right around, all-year-round?

MK: Nowadays you have seasonal, covered seasonals, intermittents and regulars. What did you call the regulars back then to tell the difference between intermittents and the regulars?

JS: Gee, I don't even know. I don't know.

MK: Anyway, going back then, when you were a reliever, did your rest breaks or your lunches change from when you were just a trimmer, just a packer?

JS: No. It stayed the same.

MK: Did you eat the same place?

JS: Eat the same place.

MK: Were there any special difficulties you encountered as a reliever?

JS: No, not that I know of.

MK: Now since you became a reliever you're dealing more with people, were there any special problems that you had in dealing with people?

JS: No.

MK: Which one did you prefer, being a reliever or being a packer?

JS: Oh, I didn't mind being a reliever because I didn't have to pick up every pineapple. That's less pineapple to pick unless somebody go out. Well, to me I think I'd rather be a reliever.

MK: Can you explain why you liked being a reliever more than being a packer?

JS: I can more or less tell you. I won't be able to describe it but anyway you feel that you have responsibilities. I mean you're doing something that is not like being an ordinary worker, packer. In the long run you know you get to better yourself. I wasn't only a reliever on the table I was also a reliever on the inspection table. Inspection table we usually had three, three relievers. All you do is check the cans that come in from the table and whatever errors we find, we report it in the book. At the [packing] table that has a lot of errors we let our head forelady, Mabel Kozuki, know. Then she'll go to the table and tell the forelady that she need to move around a little more or she need to inspect the cans a little more because the errors are being recorded in the book.

So as far as [being a] reliever on the table, I was reliever on the (packing) table for a short while then I went to be a reliever on the inspection table. We call it inspection table. Then from there I became a forelady for the inspection tables.

MK: How many people worked at the inspection table that you just mentioned?

JS: Three relievers. You see why --evidently, it's a job classified for reliever and the reliever that's on the [packing] table and the reliever that's on the inspection table is classified about even. Why they picked us, I really don't know. I know they asked me to go on the inspection table to be a reliever and at that time we didn't have the inspection, main inspection, like we call that the quality control now. So in able to control the quality of the fruit, we have to inspect it from the [packing] table to the inspection table. We inspect that and that's how we find out whether our quality is good, or that much error.

As far as, gee, working all year round at that--I don't know whether we did work all year round or we just worked limited summer and limited Christmas. That part I don't remember, so far back.

MK: Were there any rules or regulations for a reliever that were different from rules and regulations for packers?

JS: Same.

MK: How were your relations with your workers on the table?

JS: Oh, I think good.

MK: Can you say *why*?

JS: I never did have a hard time with the workers. I mean, they're very cooperative so I think good. Maybe, I don't know, the way I approach them, the way I talk to them. Maybe that makes it easier for me so it's comfortable being a reliever and working with my fellow workers.

MK: When you were promoted to reliever, did you continue to still have the same circle of friends at the cannery?

JS: Oh, yes. I don't change. I still don't; I'm still the same.

MK: So even now you have friends among, say, the packers, relievers, foreladies?

JS: Now we don't have relievers; we only have foreladies.

MK: But you do have friends in the different categories?

JS: Yes, right, right.

MK: Even before in 1937 it was that way?

JS: Uh huh, uh huh. [Yes].

MK: How were your relations with the foreladies? Did you have any specific problems?

JS: No, no problems. I had good foreladies. They were easy, easy working with. They weren't that really--I don't know--wild, or what you call them, describe them. They were really good--fun foreladies, in other words. Jokeable, very pleasant to work with.

I used to have Alice Bright, then I used to have Hilda Kekina. She [Hilda Kekina] works at the credit union and I used to have a friend of mine, Grace. She was at that time Grace Motokane and another forelady that I worked with Agnes Goto. Very nice, very nice foreladies. We became very good friends.

MK: It seems you had many different foreladies?

JS: Yeah.

MK: Does that mean that you were not assigned to a particular table?

JS: They don't assign you to a particular table.

MK: How did you know which table to go to?

JS: The head foreladies tell us what table to go to. Whatever table she needs, she tells you and if she don't need you on the table, she puts you on the inspection tables.

MK: Did you have a choice where you wanted to go?

JS: No, you go where they tell you to go.

MK: What were your feelings about this job? You said that you liked being a reliever more than a packer. Did you look forward to this job every morning and what were your feelings about this particular job, being reliever at the table and at the inspection table?

JS: I don't know. I enjoyed it. As far as looking forward to work you don't really want to work but you have to. That's the only thing that I can say, being a forelady, a reliever.

MK: In the following year, 1938, 1939 you became a seasonal forelady. Can you tell me how you got into that position?

JS: Well, the head forelady, that's Mabel, she selects like how she selects the reliever. If she feels like she needed me to be a forelady for the inspection table, so then she asked me. She told me that she wants me to be a forelady for the inspection table.

So I said, "Okay." But I didn't stay on the inspection table forelady too long after that. Then I went on the [packing] table to be forelady on the table.

MK: Do you have any notion of why she asked you to become a forelady?

JS: No, no.

MK: No inkling at all?

JS: No.

MK: Do you have any idea of what sort of qualification she may have been looking for in you?

JS: No. Well, actually when they make selection either in forelady or reliever, they always observe if you are the type that talks, not quiet. To be able to supervise on the table, on the women, you have to be able to talk to them, not be very quiet; get to them and talk to them. Evidently, I mean, I must have did a good job



being a reliever so she figure well I think she makes a good forelady. That's my assuming, I don't know, because that's how I feel. Maybe I did a good job being a reliever so she asked me---Mabel asked me to be a forelady, if I'm doing a good job. That's all I can say.

MK: Can you describe the job as a seasonal forelady?

JS: Seasonal foreladies and regular foreladies are all the same.

MK: Can you describe the job?

JS: No difference. As long as you're wearing your blue cap, you get on the table, you count your girls--that's before you start--you set them on the table where you want them to be, you tell them what their duties, what and what you expect them to do. That's all you do. Then when the table starts, you go around observing. When you find a weak person, then you get into there with that person and ask the person if they're having hard time because you could tell because they're not upkeeping with the pineapple. So when they're not upkeeping, that means they're puzzled so when they're puzzled, you have to get in there and show them what they're puzzled about. That goes right down to the different packing [positions] on the tables.

MK: When you found mistakes in your cans or were notified of mistakes from someone else....

JS: Yeah, [we were notified] from the inspection table. When [someone from the] inspection tables come to you and says, "Oh, we found this in your trays of fancy or we found this in your trays of choice. . ."

Then we don't go to the girls and say, "Hey, we have this kind of mistake in here, this kind of mistake in that." What you do is pick up the cans and spot check and there you find the guilty person. Then you correct the person, nicely.

MK: What happened to you when inspection person came to you and said, "Well, Mrs. Souza, there were some errors in the cans that came from your table."

JS: The head forelady brings it to you.

MK: What happened then?

JS: Like I just got through saying. When they bring the errors, you go and spot [check]. You go and check the cans of the individual person. You find the mistakes then you correct. One girl to one tray so there you can pick the mistake and correct the girl.

MK: How does the mistake of a girl on your table reflect on your record? Did the head forelady evaluate you on the basis of their performance?

- JS: Not during that time. They don't evaluate you but like I said, they observe you and they approach you and they talk to you. As far as mistakes in the trays, all tables has mistakes. It's not perfected, perfection.
- MK: How did you learn to be a forelady?
- JS: Well, the duties of a reliever, it's almost similar like a forelady only her responsibility is more than a reliever. She's responsible for everything that goes around on the table. If there's anything goes wrong, I am to assume the responsibility, not passing the buck to the reliever. That's the responsibility of the forelady. So in able to see that your table is running smoothly, you have to move around a little bit more, not drag your pants and check almost each tray, check on the discarding. Just keep moving.
- MK: As a forelady, do you wear gloves and actually handle the pine?
- JS: Yes, yes, we handled the pine. We have gloves on because we have to handle the cans and we have to handle whatever slices go down the table. We do work with gloves.
- MK: As the forelady in 1938-1939, did you stand most of the time?
- JS: Yes, we don't sit. It's all standing.
- MK: During the whole shift, you....
- JS: The whole shift, yeah. No sitting.
- MK: You're walking around the table?
- JS: Keep moving, yeah, keep walking, keep going around. The tables was long with nine girls. Now the tables are short. (Back then) you just walk but all you do is take care packers. You don't have to take care the trimmers.
- MK: When you're first assigned a table as a forelady in those days, was there a seniority system? Nowadays, you say that I'm number 18 or number 17.
- JS: I don't even know whether we were going according to seniority. I don't know. Whatever is being done between the head forelady and the head, I don't know. Maybe some people would know but I didn't know whether we go on senioritywise or not.
- MK: At that time, then, you didn't know yourself or other foreladies as the number 3 forelady or number 15 forelady?
- JS: Yeah, we didn't. I mean, I didn't know about the others. Maybe they knew that I just came in now or so-and-so came in before me. That part I don't know. In fact I don't even remember who was ahead of me. I didn't pay any attention. Young girl don't pay any attention.

Maybe now when I'm mature maybe I would sort of say, "Hey how come so-and-so is up forelady before I do." But at that time it didn't bother me at all.

MK: You know you started being a forelady during the season time. What's the difference between being a forelady season time and a forelady another time?

JS: No, when you're a forelady during season time, non-season you're not a forelady. You go back packing. Or if you was a reliever [before season], you go back reliever.

MK: So you go up and down?

JS: Yeah, yeah, right. We call that seasonal forelady.

MK: Were there any difficulties that you encountered as a seasonal forelady?

JS: No. No. None.

MK: Were there any special rules and regulations for seasonal foreladies?

JS: No, no. It's not only for forelady or reliever, it's for everybody, rules and regulations. Whatever is for the workers, the packers, it's the same thing for the relievers, same like for the foreladies.

MK: Were you ever instructed by someone who said, "Well, as a forelady you're allowed to do these, these and these things, but as a forelady you are not allowed to do these other things."

JS: No. Nobody told us anything about that, not that I can remember.

MK: In 1938, 1939, you were forelady, right?

JS: Uh huh. [Yes].

MK: When you became a forelady in 1940, a full time forelady, how did you get the job?

JS: Well, that's depends on the amount of tables running. They need the foreladies so I held my position as forelady right through.

MK: Why did they choose you and not some other seasonal forelady to move up?

JS: Well I guess I'm the most, what you call, experienced one. So you would say that I was the seniority one, in other words. I don't know but that's how. I was the forelady that's available to be forelady, I guess. (Laughs).

MK: In each of these cases where you moved up, you were asked by someone to take the position?

JS: Yes.

MK: Were there any cases back then where you, the worker, would go and say, "I want to move up. Can I become a forelady"?

JS: You don't tell them what you want to be. They tell you if they want you.

MK: So when you become forelady, there are no, say, announcements or anything that a certain position was open?

JS: No, not in those days. No job posting, in other words.

MK: As a seasonal forelady, you work with students and maybe housewives. As a regular forelady, you worked....

JS: Same.

MK: With the other people too, right, regular, intermittents?

JS: All, right.

MK: What's the difference between working with students and working with intermittent workers?

JS: Okay. Like the regular workers, not regulars but the all-year-round workers, they're a little bit more experienced than the school students. School students come in rookies so they have to learn quite a bit of what the regular workers knew. But then we still have to divide our tables, not all school students. We have to have some old people, some experienced people [on the table with the students]. We call it [the workers] experienced and inexperienced. But the inexperienced, well, they qualified workers as soon as they get on the table.

Anybody would rather have someone that worked long [work on the tables]. In other words, senioritywise, they [experienced workers] would know more about the work than the brand new person that come in.

I give my attention to them equally. Maybe some other people don't do it but I do. I give my people, my workers, same attention like I give the others, school student or housewives.

MK: Were there any special problems with students?

JS: No, not at that time.

MK: When you're working with students, how does that affect your relationship with the workers? When you're working with, say, intermittents or housewives, you're a housewife, too, and you talk

about certain things. When you have students, how does that sort of thing change?

JS: Oh, our conversation would be something about the students, what interests them and what they say, what you know. Whatever subject or topic come up, I join in and try to converse the same topic that they're trying to bring up because it gets boring if you don't talk or laugh or anything, see. So we do horse around a little bit. I do, I do quite a bit.

(Laughter)

JS: I do a lot of singing on the table. I get everybody singing, too.

MK: Oh, you would get the whole table singing?

JS: No, no, no, just go around humming, singing, and whatnot. When I get bored, that's what I do. I sing quite a bit. So when I sing, the workers listen and if they know, they join in. The tray boys, I would horse around with the tray boys, too. Because I'm young I still horse around with the tray boys, teasing them and all that. But still I do my work. I run my work well.

MK: You just said that the work would get boring?

JS: Me. I get bored myself.

MK: You would get bored?

JS: When I get bored, I sing. With anything, I start singing.

MK: What other things did you do to deal with your boredom?

JS: Nothing. I guess when I get a little bored then I sing a little bit. Then I get pepped up again. Then I go on, do my duties.

MK: By 1940 you had gone through many different jobs. Did you find any one job more boring than another one?

JS: I don't think so. I don't even notice whether anything would bore me. It's all the same thing. Like when I said boring, it's actually not something that I'm tired or the job is not interesting or something. It's just that music comes into my mind whenever I'm doing something. Like I said, when I'm kind of bored, then that's when the music comes in automatically. I just hum and sing. When I feel like singing a little louder then the girls hear me. They say, "I know the song too; I'll sing." But then you have to control it; it don't get out of hand. Sometimes we get out of hand, too.

MK: What happened when you got out of hand?

JS: No, we don't get out of hand. (Laughs).

MK: You never....

JS: We control it. Like I said, we control it. I got to control it, the table.

MK: When you felt maybe that it was getting out of control, how would you control it?

JS: We just stop, that's all. We just stop, everything all quiet. Everybody is busy working so you just stopped it.

MK: You know right now you're talking about music. At that time was the cannery providing music on a phonograph player for cannery workers?

JS: Gee, I don't even remember that time. I don't know. I don't think so. Maybe they did, but I didn't pay any attention.

MK: Okay, now I want you to think about the whole period that you worked at Dole, just from 1935 to 1940. Now, can you remember the pay you had in 1935?

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

JS: I think regular packers was making 15 cents an hour. Then as I went up as a reliever, I think my pay went up more. So I guess it was 20 cents and then 25 cents. That was during that time [1937] but by the time I left, 1940, I think the pay was about 25 cents. I'm not sure, though.

MK: According to what I've read, it said that the pine cannery workers received a 5-cents-per-hour raise in 1937.

JS: Nineteen thirty-seven.

MK: Do you remember anything about that raise?

JS: Moneywise I wasn't paying any attention. Actually, being young, too, I didn't pay any attention. But I remember it [hourly wage] was supposed to be either 15 cents an hour or 20 cents an hour. But I know I got to 20 cents an hour. How I got it, whether from [becoming] forelady or from reliever or whatever, I cannot say.

MK: You were saying that you didn't think that much about your money back then because you were young?

JS: Yeah. So happy to get the pay envelope so not paying any attention [to] how much you make an hour. I don't think I really did pay any attention how much I make an hour from packer, from reliever and from forelady. Real banana, yeah.



(Laughter)

MK: Mrs. Souza, you told me earlier that you used to give your pay to your step-mother. Were you doing that till 1940?

JS: Yeah, until I got married [October, 1939]. When I go home with my pay envelope, I don't know why but I had the feeling that I should give my pay envelope to my step-mother. But she gives me money; she gives back to me. I did that until I got married. But I cannot tell you how much she give me back. That I don't remember.

MK: If, at that time, you did not give your money to your step-mother, would that have really hurt your family financially?

JS: I don't think so. It's just that I thought I should give my step-mother money and try to help the family.

MK: Going through the 1935 to 1940 period, you mentioned some of the company-sponsored activities that you used to go to in 1935. Did any of those change during the five-year period?

JS: What do you mean?

MK: You said you went to dances and picnics. You went to the chop suey houses. Did any of those activities change between 1935 and 1940?

JS: No, it didn't change. It was still the same, those dinners, picnics and everything. It was the workers that actually formed it. It's not a company-sponsored; it's the individual, the workers. They want to have fun after working hard. So we have our steering committee that starts passing rumors [about upcoming social events] around. We did enjoy all those things that we did during that past years. The company furnishes the truck when we go to picnic.

MK: In reading about the pineapple companies, I've heard of say, a gym and sports. Were there sports activities that you participated in?

JS: No, I didn't participate in any of the sports.

MK: Why?

JS: I don't know. I go to work and I go home. So I don't go around too much. Only when we have these cannery functions, then I go. I'm a lousy sports person now. At that time, when I was younger, I was sort of a tomboy but maybe it's because I didn't know where they were going. I didn't know what and what to do. Maybe I was afraid, too, to get involved. I played badminton when badminton just came out. It's a lot of fun but that's all, just at the gym. Just play just for fun but to get involved in any other sports activities, no.

MK: When you played badminton, were there all sorts of facilities in the gym? Shower facilities and everything? No?

JS: No. It's just a gym to, you know, to play badminton. I guess they played basketball and things like that but I don't remember. I didn't even bother about the shower and stuff like that, no.

MK: From the 1935 to 1940 time, were there any big changes in working conditions?

JS: No, none that I know of. They were all the same.

MK: From 1935 to 1940 you were there five years, right, and you had five years seniority over someone who was just starting in 1940. Being there for five years, what was the difference between a new person and you?

JS: Oh....nothing new.

MK: How about any privileges that you had that that person didn't have?

JS: We didn't have that much privileges. We just go to work and go home, nothing different, all the same. Nineteen thirty-five to 1940 nothing much different. As an ordinary worker, as a reliever and a packer, I don't remember anything different.

MK: So at that time it didn't make too much difference whether you worked one year or five years or even more years?

JS: No. That's right. As far as like now we classify them as seniority whatever years you worked there. But that time I guess we didn't realize. We didn't have such thing as union so they didn't know nothing about that. It's sort of--what do you call that--favoritism. To me I think it's favoritism but...

MK: Can you explain how the favoritism system worked?

JS: No, well, like I said, maybe---I don't know it's just me. Maybe like to get promoted like that. The supervisors like you or maybe the foremen like you and they say, "I would like to have that person to be a forelady or I would like to have that person to be a reliever." Whether they're senioritywise or not, to me, I think it's favorite. But maybe I'm wrong.

MK: In those days, 1935 to 1940, were there ways that, say, a person could get to be a favorite of a supervisor or forelady?

JS: Gee, that part I wouldn't be able to know. Not then. I mean, no.

MK: Then what makes you think it was favoritism?

JS: Well, I don't know. I won't be able to tell you that part. I think it's favoritism. Nothing you do in return but I think if

they like you....But as far as how to describe because they like you, I won't be able to describe it. It's just the feeling that you have. So, they like me but you see like Mabel Kozuki is a nice person. She's an up-and-up person. So to me I think if she feels that individual is going to be a good worker and she selects them, I think she did out of her good choice.

MK: During those five years, 1935 to 1940, were there any changes in the technology of the pine cannery? Did any machines change or any processes change from when you first got in?

JS: No, it was all the same.

MK: Between 1935 and 1940 do you remember how many tables were in operation season time?

JS: No.

MK: Could you approximate, maybe?

JS: Probably 48 because when I went back 1951, there were about 48 and they looked the same. I'm not sure now.

MK: I don't know if you'd remember but can you sort of approximate how many months per year the cannery was operating then?

JS: That I cannot remember. That I don't remember.

MK: In those days, did they contact you the same way that they do nowadays? Did they call?

JS: No different. They....

MK: How different?

JS: They sent you a card and on the card they punch something. You bring the card in. I think the card punches whatever work that you did--I'm not sure now--and then you come down and then the hirers come out. It's not personnel office; it's just the foremen. They come out, they pick up the card, they look at your card, they say, "Oh, you come up," and they send you in the office. That's how it was being done.

MK: How about day to day? How did you know that well, I have to go to work today?

JS: Oh, they let you know the day before. They say, "We have work tomorrow."

MK: Was there a rule on saying you have to be notified 24 hours in advance?

JS: Uh uh. No rules those days.

MK: When did you usually get your calls to come to work?

JS: Close to summer. I like to tell you I know for the fact summer we worked because that's when the season is. But after summer, September, October, how many months we close, how many months we go back, I don't remember.

MK: Were there any unusual events or accidents or anything like that, that occurred in the cannery during those five years?

JS: Uh uh, none that I can remember.

MK: You told me that you left in 1940? Why did you....

JS: December, 1940. I was pregnant with my oldest son and very sick. I lost so much weight. So my husband said, "I think you better quit and stay home."

All my lady friends, my friends that was working say, "I don't think you should work." I was pregnant about four months, I think, when I quit.

MK: You said you were sick. Was that related to your pregnancy?

JS: Pregnancy, yes.

MK: How did you deal with that in the cannery? When you felt sick, what happened?

JS: Well, I didn't throw up at all. But I couldn't eat. I was so sick. I had the morning sickness for about three or four months, I was really sick. I lost a lot of weight so then my husband said, "I think you better quit, stay home." So I did.

MK: What were your feelings about quitting?

JS: I didn't give it a second thought. (Laughs) I was so sick.

MK: Did the company have a policy on what to do with women who became pregnant?

JS: I don't remember. I know we have, we have physical when they hire. Now whether they were strict on pregnant women or whatever, I don't know.

MK: You were saying that when you first got hired, they gave you a physical. They checked if you were pregnant?

JS: Yeah. I mean when I come down to think we go to physical and they must give you examination for pregnancy. Of course, they didn't do that to me. But they do skin disease. They check on your eye; they check on your ears. That's all I can remember but I took it

for granted that they do examine people who is pregnant. I think unless they volunteer, tell the nurses that they're pregnant. Then they give them the examination or they get the doctor's permission [to work]. That [part] I cannot be really sure.

MK: In the cannery in those days, were there many women working while they were pregnant?

JS: I don't remember. Not as much as they do now. I don't remember seeing women pregnant.

MK: Nowadays a lot of women who do get pregnant continue working?

JS: Lots of them.

MK: How long do you say they continue?

JS: Oh, some of them they give birth next month, eight months. As long as they get the paper from the doctor. The doctor okays them, they can work. The dispensary lets them work.

MK: You don't know what they used to do back in 1940, though?

JS: I don't know what they did--whether they did (allow). Maybe I didn't know the difference between a woman being pregnant or something like that, (Laughs) you know what I mean. These past three, four years I've seen women that's pregnant still working. But previous to that, they had a ruling that you could be working only for so many months and then that's it. They don't ask for doctor's paper. But probably was because they didn't have this maternity leave. Before when you pregnant, you could have compensation or something like that. But then they did away with it. You have to give birth and be two months or three months before they give you benefits so they don't have nothing. They go to work when they pregnant because some of them they need the money because husband and wife work right in the cannery. The money is not that much, yeah. Maybe that's why they are allowed to work as long as the doctor say that it's okay for them to work.

MK: Back then, did the company have a maternity leave program for you?

JS: Gee, I don't even know. All I know I quit. Maybe we have to quit because we pregnant.

MK: Did you make an effort to check?

JS: No, I didn't. I didn't even check so could be that they may have. But I didn't check so I don't know.

MK: Now, looking back, way back, you worked Christmas time CPC, 1934?

JS: Yes.

MK: You worked Libby's 1935, early part?

JS: Yes.

MK: Then you worked Dole from 1935 summertime, yeah?

JS: Uh huh. [Yes].

MK: Which place did you like the best, CPC, Libby's or Dole?

JS: Must be Dole because I keep going back to Dole. But at that time it was Hawaiian Pineapple.

MK: Why did you like that place the best?

JS: I don't know. Maybe because I made friends with people. Where I worked at Dole they get lots of people you be with. You work CPC, you don't have that many people. That's a very small cannery. I work Libby warehouse, very few people. It's not that big. I didn't think I wanted to stay Libby. Maybe they gave me a chance to keep on going back CPC, probably I would like the job as a jam worker because it was very easy, not strenuous. I would have been a CPC worker today but since Dole, I mean Hawaiian Pine, hired me I went back. From then on I went continuously back, every summer, until they hired me. They kept me as a regular worker.

MK: Now when you look back on those three canneries, what was the most important differences between the three if you had to pick out one, two, three differences or just one difference, even? What was the most important difference besides the number of people?

JS: Maybe it's the work, you know working as a packer. It took quite a while before I became reliever but I think I enjoyed packing. I think I enjoyed packing, being a packer at Dole.

MK: Now you told me that between 1941 and 1951 you stayed at home because you had children to take care of. During those years you had World War II, right?

JS: Right.

MK: There were labor shortages during that time. Did the canneries at any time call you back to work?

JS: No.

MK: They never called you back to work?

JS: At that particular time Mary Kunani was in the personnel office. She's very concerned about my children. We were pretty close as a worker, coworkers. There's several times I go down to visit her. I bring my children with me, kidding her and telling her, "Oh, I'm going to come back to work."



Her eyes would open real big and she says, "Look, you're coming to work. Who's going to watch the children."

I say, "Oh, I'm not coming to work because the baby is small. I just came down to see you." So I know she's concerned about who's going to take care the children when I go to work. So, no, they never did call me.

MK: Mary Kunani was a personal friend of yours?

JS: We as a friend, we were close. She considered me as one of her foreladies when I left the cannery. I guess, she got to know me well so when I went back again 1951, she considered me as her former forelady worker. I guess she really took a liking of her workers, her past workers, everyone, not only me, but everyone. She's concerned about how they are, how they doing, things like that. When you meet her in town, "Oh, how are you," and all that. She's the type that I think is concerned with her fellow workers.

MK: Was that a concern of the company or of that woman, Mary Kunani?

JS: Her feelings, that's hers, it's not company. That's how she is. She's that type of a woman. Very nice woman. She's still living, I think.

MK: You know you just mentioned that Mary Kunani was concerned about your children?

JS: Uh huh. [Yes.]

MK: Were the other people that worked with you, say, the forelady, section head, Mabel Kozuki, did they show that type of concern for their workers' families?

JS: Oh, I don't know. Well, maybe it's because she knows I quit the cannery because I was going to have my children. I went to visit her with my oldest son so she was happy that I stayed home and I take care my son. Then afterwards when I went back to apply for work, then she showed her concern telling me how many children I had and I said, "Three."

Then she asked me, "You coming to work?"

I said, "Yes."

Then she says, "Who's going to take care the children"?

Then I told her that the youngest is six years old when I went back to work and he's able to take care himself. I watch them in the morning. When my brother comes home from school--he was going to McKinley High School--he watches my children until my husband comes back from work. He gets back about 3:30 [p.m.]. From there on, he carries the household duties like cooking their dinner, feeding them. My brother sees that they take a bath and my husband

puts them to bed. So with my husband's help I was able to work second shift at Dole.

MK: So Mary Kunani heard all that....

JS: Yes. When I went back. I asked her, and she says, "Oh, your baby is big."

I say, "Yes and it's being take care of."

She said, "Okay." She called the office and had somebody to come out and get me because they had already hired their quota for the week. She called Mr. Healy [Robert Healy]--at that time he was the foreman there. She called Mr. Healy and she told Mr. Healy, "I have a forelady here."

I go like this, "I'm not a forelady, I'm a worker."

She says, "No, you're my former forelady and they need experienced workers. We hired the quota this morning." I went down in the afternoon after my brother came back from school.

So then Mr. Healy sent out our timekeeper, Mr. Kanky Chun [Kan Mun Chun]. He came out check. He knew me when I left 1940. He said, "Oh, you coming back to work."

"Yes, I have to come back to work because my children going to go to Catholic school. We need uniforms so I have to come back to work."

That's how I was hired. Mary Kunani called the office and the office sent somebody out and got me. I went in and I started to work the next day.

MK: Without knowing Mary Kunani, do you think you could have gotten the job?

JS: I don't know that part.

MK: You mentioned a quota. Did they have a daily quota or a weekly quota?

JS: Hiring quota. I think it was weekly quota. I think they hired in the morning and I went in the afternoon. They hire according to the amount of people they want. So evidently they had their quota for that week, for the second shift. I had asked for second shift. But then they said they could put me in so that's how I was hired.

MK: It seems from your conversation that people knew you and you knew people. So in those days, was the cannery much smaller in terms of people than it is today?

JS: No. Talk about Kanky knowing us. He's a timekeeper so he comes down. Coming down and taking people's names--it was people's names all the time-- taking bango numbers continuously every day. As you work, they get to familiarize with you. They get to know you. Very, very family-like, close. Those people are very close.

MK: Were you on a first name basis with these people?

JS: Yes, right. Julia.

MK: You called them by their first names, too?

JS: Well, we called them by their nickname. Like, for instance Kanky is Kanky. I didn't know his real name until later.

MK: Oh, what is his real name?

JS: Chun, I think. I still don't know. I should know. I knew when he retired. Of course, they had long years' workers.

MK: Why is it that Mr. Healy was called Mr. Healy and not by his....

JS: His last name is Healy. His last name is Healy, first name is Bob. But when he comes to supervisor, you don't call them by first name; you call them by their last name.

MK: Where do you draw the line? Where do you stop calling people by the first name?

JS: Well, just workers, foreladies, head foreladies. And like Mary Kunani, we call her Mary Kunani. We just don't call her only Mary. Mr. Healy is a supervisor. We don't call him Bob. We call him Healy. I don't know. When I left [1940], we had a Mr. Bown. People used to call him "Porcupine" but that was his nickname.

MK: (Laughs) Uh huh.

JS: Lots of the girls didn't know that his name was Bown, B-O-W-N. They used to call him "Porcupine". See what I mean. So naturally, when you leave you don't know their last name. Bob, Mr. Healy, we knew his name was Mr. Healy, so we called him Mr. Healy.

MK: Now that you've mentioned nicknames, was it a practice to give a lot of people nicknames?

JS: I really don't know how they get their names. It's already known.

MK: By talking with coworkers, you find out?

JS: That's right. Oh, that's so-and-so, and that's so-and-so. Oh, that's Kanky, or that's so-and-so.

MK: I was wondering why did you choose to return to pineapple? Why didn't you go to some other kind of work?

- JS: For housewives, it's good. They have shifts, you can pick the shift you want and then you can take care your family, too. That's why I went back to the cannery.
- MK: So that's why you think it's good for housewives to work at the cannery?
- JS: The cannery, yes. Me, I think, [for] housewives was good but then the money wasn't too bad, either, and the hours.
- MK: How much....
- JS: I think we were having a dollar and a quarter [\$1.25].
- MK: And the hours?
- JS: The hours is 7 hours, and 7-1/2 hours, 8 hours. You know, 2:30 [p.m.] until 10:00 [p.m.] 10:30 [p.m.] like that.
- MK: Why did you pick Dole again?
- JS: Like today I have a good record, eh. It counts when you have a good record. When I told them I was quitting, they told me to come back again. Whenever I need a job to come back again.
- MK: You said it counts if you have a good record. How does it count?
- JS: I think with everything, if you have a good record, it counts. In life if you have a good record, it's accounted for.
- MK: How does it help you? Is it easy to get the job. Is it easier to get a better job or how does....it count?
- JS: Well, you see, like for instance, it counts when you leave there--that you have a good record, okay. I'm not a thief, I'm not a liar and I'm not a fighter and my attitude. Those things, I think, they keep a record. Nobody gets to see those records. One of the most important thing that they look into is attitude and cooperation. Then able to instruct, able to teach the person. All those things is accounted for. To me, that's how you get to be promoted, also, maybe. I don't know. I cannot say it's a proof that they do have that. But that's what I mean, your record is good and it counts.
- MK: Why did you come back to be a packer? How did you get to be a packer again? Was it all because Mary Kunani?
- JS: No, it's on your record. If you're a packer and you go back again, you're going to be a packer again because you're qualified. They call you a qualified packer.
- MK: Back when you returned in 1951, did you have to go through another physical examination?

JS: Uh huh. Yes.

MK: Was it the same as the one you described before?

JS: Oh, yes, about the same.

MK: Did they again check if you were pregnant?

JS: No, not when I went back. They didn't check. I think pregnancy is a volunteer thing. You let them know you're pregnant, okay. If you don't let them know you're pregnant and if they're suspicious that that lady looks like she's pregnant, they're going to come to you and say, "Go to the dispensary." Then they'll call the dispensary and tell the dispensary, "We want this woman to be examined whether she's pregnant." But that particular time, I think you cannot work more than six months. But now, I guess they allow---they could work as long as they can, as long as the doctor tells them it's okay. I've known of women two weeks more before they give birth, they're still working. I get so afraid for them. My, just like the stomach is ready to give birth, but they're still working. The doctor says okay.

MK: In 1951 did you have to be retrained? Was there any training program that you had to go through?

JS: No, they just put me on the table and say, "Work."

MK: So when you were put back on the table, you were just a packer? Was packing different in any ways since 1945?

JS: To me it was much faster. I keep chasing the cylinders. I picking up my pine and I'm packing my fancy--You have to pack your fancy and choice. The pineapple going down, I picking up the pineapple, coming down again, packing my pineapple. Oh, pick up the pineapple. Oh, was really frustrating. I was frustrated because I think by the time I left like 1939 and 1940, we were already packing the pineapple a whole cylinder. When I come down to think about it. Going back 1951, I went on the table and I started to pack, discarding and packing the choice, packing the B's and packing the fancy. Then was hectic because to me was fast. Pineapple running away and picking up.

People coming up front and telling me, "Hello Julia, nice to see you."

I go like this, I say, "Get away, I'm chasing my pineapple. Don't talk to me." Then the reliever comes and helps me, that's Nona Chang. She comes and helps me with the pineapple.

The forelady comes in and says, "What's the matter, Julia."

I said, "I don't know. I need octopus hands." Kept on going. Yeah, it seemed to be much faster. But....

MK: You were just saying that you, you think you folks were packing the whole cylinder? Can you explain?

JS: A whole cylinder is when you pick up the whole pineapple. [Each girl selects and packs all the slices from a single pine.] You discard your top slices. You grade your B's and you grade your choice. Then you turn (the pine) around, this (butt side) fancy. You discard the thin slice on the butt end. Then you have a slice on the butt end that has a little trim. If it has a small trim [i.e., a sliver of fruit trimmed off], you put it in the choice. If it's a big trim, you put for B's. (The next slices from butt side is fancy.) You roll the whole pineapple, (continue grading). Now, you see, you just can imagine what and what you have to do with a whole cylinder. Then if you just been put on the table, not familiar with the speed, gads, I'm telling you.... chasing the (pine)...

MK: Each girl has to pack all the different grades by herself?

JS: By herself. The cylinder coming down. Each girl has to pick up her pineapple because there's a counter over there that's counting. She's counting four-two, see, so if my pineapple is going to go down, the girl is going to get an extra pine on the end. So naturally the forelady is going to say, "Pick up your pine, pick up your pine." Those are the days that they're yelling at the people.

MK: Why were they yelling?

JS: To pick up the pineapple. You see, if they don't pick up the pineapple, the girl at the end is going to get extra pine.

MK: Who's yelling?

JS: Some of the girls at the end.

(Laughter)

JS: Yelling at the girls up there [at the beginning of the table]. I mean, those are the things that's going on but I just got hired. I just got on the table. I'm not familiar with the working conditions, was kind of really hectic.

MK: You just mentioned a counter. You said four-two, what does that mean?

JS: Oh, we have six girls on a table, six packers. The counter (she) is going to count the first two cylinders, the first two girls pick these up. The last four (pines) coming down, the last four girls pick these up. So you get six packers. If the girl up here (towards the start of the table) she's a slow packer, one extra cylinder is going to go down, yeah. If she's not hurrying up to pick up the two pineapples when I'm the last girl, my pineapple coming down, I picking up my pineapple, and the (slow girl's)



pineapple coming too. I'm picking up my pineapple. I picking up (only) my pineapple because my hand is not fast. I'm not used to. Until I get myself used to, then I'm able to catch up.

MK: You know you were saying the first two girls pick up the first two pine cylinders that come down. Then the last of you ....

JS: The last four [packers] picks the last four [sliced pineapple cylinders].

MK: Do you count or do you....

JS: No, the girl in the front [the first girl on the table] is counting. This is how she counts. This is the cylinder going down, okay.

MK: Okay.

JS: This is the cylinder all far apart like this. The counter [at the start of the packing table] is going to count the pineapple. Two pines going down (the table). That's for the first two girls. Then going get four pines. She's going to pull it up [i.e., delay the four pines] like that until there's a space over here [between the first two pines and these four pines]. Pull it up, release, then four (pines move down the table). Then she get two pines again, these goes down the line.

MK: Oh.

JS: So this first two pines, I (the first packer) pick my one --first pine. The second girl pick her pine--second pine. Then this four come down. The third girl pick up her one. Then the fourth and the fifth girl and so on. Okay, if this particular girl, the fourth one, she's not picking her pineapple, she busy, that thing (pine) is going to go down like that. So that's an extra pine going down. So naturally the girl at the end yells, "Pick up your pineapple." x

MK: Do you mean that the counter at the top of the line, she is really spacing it so that two pines go down together first then she leaves a space then four...

JS: Yeah, four (pines) go down.

MK: Then two again then four again? [See diagram section in the Introduction.]

JS: That's right.

MK: Is that her only work?

JS: That's all she does but they (i.e., workers on the table) rotate. Yes, every hour you shift.

MK: Is there one position that you liked better than another?

JS: No.

MK: It didn't matter whether you were third or fourth girl?

JS: It didn't matter where you go because you gotta pick up your cylinder and work just as hard as the ones above. Only thing, the one down at the end is going to work a little harder if the girls up at the beginning of the table is not picking up their cylinder. Even if you pick up your pineapple and put it on the side, the reliever or the forelady will come and help you but some won't. Some will, but not everyone--very few does.

MK: Did you call over the reliever and say, "Help me now."

JS: You could. The first time I went back, Nona Chang was my reliever. She's cute, she comes, she's nice, she comes over there and then she helps. "What's the matter, Jule," she tells like that.

"Eh I need help, I no more octopus hands." "Help," I go like that. Then the forelady come one side. The reliever comes the other side.

MK: How long did that hectic period last? How long did it take for you to get used to?

JS: Took me one week.

MK: One week?

JS: But you see, the thing is I packed for a while. I don't know how long I stayed on the packing table. Then they took me to the chunks table. We used to have manual chunks that you feed with your scoop. You feed it, on a machine. [You feed pineapple slices into a machine.] They gun it. You put the cans underneath, and you see the chunks.

MK: Oh. What do you feed and what do you scoop?

JS: The slice. There's a thick pineapple [slice] like this.

MK: Two inches thick?

JS: ...yeah, it comes down. They strip off the thin slice and the the girls has a stick. They scoop the stick [i.e., put the stick through the center of the pine slices] and they put it [pine] into the machine and the girls gun it.

MK: When they gun it, what happens?

JS: It comes out into chunks.

MK: It cuts it up as it comes out?

JS: Yeah. That's the manual kind.

MK: Oh. Why were you switched to that?

JS: Well, they want to teach you to work all different places because then eventually, like I said, that year I went back I became reliever. If they didn't shift me around all kind places, I wouldn't have been familiar with the work.

END OF INTERVIEW

Tape No. 6-16-3-79  
ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Julia Souza (JS)

March 12, 1979

Kuliouou, Oahu

BY: Michiko Kodama (MK)

MK: This is an interview with Mrs. Julia Souza on March 12, 1979 at her home in Kuliouou.

Today, Mrs. Souza, I'm going to continue with the 1951 Dole experience. First of all I'd like to ask you at that time, were you a seasonal worker that 1951 summer when you came back?

JS: I just started, not realizing I was going to be an intermittent. I just was going to work only for summer because I thought my boys need my help more at home after the cannery, you know. Work and I stay home take care my children. But as the summer went by, my husband thought it would be a good idea that I continue on working.

I told him---I said, "Look, I'm not the one to say, 'I am to keep on working,' but if they do ask me, if it's okay with you, then I'll continue on working."

"Oh, yes," he said, "The money come in good."

Because where he was working he wasn't making too much money so I said, "Okay." When they mention to me then I'll say, "Oh, I want to be one of the intermittent workers."

MK: When did you become an intermittent?

JS: That very year. That very year so my hiring date of that 1951, was July 11, 1951. That's when they hired me to work and I kept on working until today.

MK: How did you become an intermittent worker?

JS: Well, evidently the....supervisors, or whatever, needed a little more workers so that they could run more tables. I think, if I'm not mistaken, there were about 51 of us that they had asked us if we have a chance to work all year around, would we work, each individual one. As for myself, I said, "Yes." I would work if they want workers.

MK: Why is it that they needed so many at that time?

JS: Gee, I really didn't know because at that time I don't know how many people were working. Why they needed that much additional intermittent, I don't know.

MK: Was it unusual for them to ask that many people to be intermittents?

JS: At that time I thought was unusual because the following years they didn't make very many intermittent. Evidently, they must have had their quota to run the tables all year around. The following year, that was 1952, 1952 and 1953, they didn't get too many intermittents. We call them intermittents to work all year around. Because if they (i.e., non-intermittents) work during the summer and when they (i.e., company) don't need them, then they lay them off. Then [1952, 1953] they (i.e., company) make intermittents as they need so they made very little, maybe two or three or four. But, 1954, they made another group, another big group. How many, I don't know. How they go about it, how they need the people, I don't know.

MK: You know, 1951 was the year they had the Lanai strike. I was wondering if the Lanai strike affected you in any way?

JS: In the cannery?

MK: Yeah.

JS: No, not for us, for Dole. That strike I guess didn't cut down our force. But 1950, there was another strike previous to that year. I think was 1948.

MK: Nineteen forty-seven.

JS: Oh, 1947. At that time, I wasn't working but I heard that they had a strike but it wasn't too long. But then they got people from the cannery to go on the field to work. How long, they said was short. I cannot quote the time.

MK: Going back to your 1951 experience, you said you became an intermittent. Did people clamor to become intermittents? Did people really want to become intermittent and ask to be kept on?

JS: No, well, they (i.e., company) had their way of getting to the people and having them become intermittents. The first thing I thought they go by is the ones that returning, that comes back every summer. That's one of the people that I think they would approach. Then like for myself, I made reliever as soon as I came in. I wasn't the only one; there were several of us people, women, that came in that year, our first year, and made reliever. So there I think they (i.e. company) classified them by going relievers first and the number of years returnees. Like for myself, I was a former worker so probably they recognized my

record for to be asked as an intermittent. After they had the relievers all taken care of and then the old-timers that comes back every summer [were taken care of]. They (i.e., company) nit-pick and they get the ones that just came that summer. But how many of them, I really don't know.

MK: When you returned in that 1951 period, were you working eight-hour days, ten-hour days?

JS: Eight hours.

MK: Eight-hour days. If you worked over eight hours, were you getting overtime?

JS: Gee, that I don't know. Yeah, that one I cannot say because I don't remember working more than eight hours. The thing is, I worked second shift and then I always go home around 10:30 [p.m.], 11 o'clock [p.m.] so I don't think we had such thing as working around the clock. I could be wrong so I don't want to commit myself. But, I know we were working eight hours. That's why I was able to take care my children the next day, get up and get them ready for school. During the summer, they didn't have to go to school.

MK: You just mentioned that you worked night shift, huh?

JS: Second shift, yeah.

MK: Is there a difference in the amount of work there is between night shift and day shift?

JS: No, same. What they do during the day is the same thing, same uniform way of working.

MK: Are the same types of people working night shift during the season? Is it mostly students or intermittents, or....

JS: Well, they had quite a few intermittents and they had quite a few seasonal workers.

MK: So there's no difference in terms of the work force?

JS: No. Right.

MK: Did you notice any changes in the rest or lunch facilities or rules since 1940?

JS: Well, I think at that time they had break period. It was labor law that they had to have 12 minutes break time within eight hours, before lunch and after lunch. If you worked less than eight hours, then you only have one break and if you work eight hours, then you have two breaks and it's required for 12 minutes for one break. We have light signals to state that we're going on our break.



Because they had such thing as labor union--the ILWU was already with Dole when I went back--I guess it was a law thing because I didn't ask them what's what.

I just followed everybody like a herd of cattle following the head. I didn't know at that time whether it was a must. As the years go by, I heard it has to be as long as you work eight hours, it has to be two breaks, one before lunch and one after lunch.

MK: Everything else was the same?

JS: Yeah. Then it went on right until today. We still have the break periods, same thing.

MK: When you came back in 1951, were there any things that you found especially difficult to do or anything that was uncomfortable or any gripes that you had when you came back?

JS: No. Only to me when I came back, it seemed as though fruit was coming down too fast. Well, it could be that I haven't been working for 11 years. The hands are a little slower. At first I said it (i.e., speed of the fruit coming down to be packed) was fast. It may be a little faster than usual, once upon a time in 1940, but actually when you don't work for a long time, your motion and your reaction is a little slower.

But, I didn't gripe because I thought new. I need the job so I just do what they tell me to do. I just work where they tell me to work. It was no specific area or any favorite thing that I liked best or anything that I didn't care for. It's just that my hours counted. I getting paid for what I do so whatever I was doing, I did it because I needed the money. So I just do what I was told to do.

MK: You know at that time when the machine was going kind of fast, could you do anything about the speed or could someone at your table do something about the speed?

JS: No, nobody can. There's no control. It's already set but this is the thing.

We know the supervisors and we say, "Hey, what did they do. Did they speed up the machine?"

This is the answer, "No, no, no, no, they didn't speed up the machine. It's you. You've been resting too long."

So I say, "Oh yeah. Okay." That's all. I accepted.

(Laughter)

MK: You were saying that at that time in 1951 they put you in different departments once in a while, huh?

JS: Not exactly departments. It's in the Preparation Department but different item pack. The main item pack that is mostly done with everybody is the slices--the fancy, choice, and the B's but then they have other tables that they call it the chunk tables. They have thick slices going into square chunks. That procedure of working is a little different.

Then they have--they call it "specials"--where they run the tidbits and that's all hand work. It's not like now; it's modern. At that time, it's scooping the fruit, putting it into the machine to come out for tidbits is being manually done. The boys put the pans on. The pans are being filled from the packing tables, if they need. That depend how the item is being ordered. If they need that much item, then they put more pans on the table. Everything is being done manually. The girls pack it in the pan. The truckers truck it to the side where we call the "specials". The girls all scoop the pineapple with hand scoops. All hand work. Those are the things that we get to go around to work which is lot of fun. It's not monotony, something different. At first we get the hardest time finding the holes for the pineapple. We get two scoops. You have the hardest time but you have to put a little speed in it to be able to keep up with the machine. I think some of the places we had about three or four girls. They scoop and then each one pulls, puts it down and then it goes into a machine and they cut it. That's all manually cut. It's either in the small cans or in the big can, the gallon can.

But then as the years went by, they modernized the cannery. The chunks on the table, they modernized that. All it did was the pineapple going on the belt and goes into the machine then they have the cutter cut it and it fills the cans automatically. That's when the cans go up on the belt. That's when we had this carrier, can carrier, that carries the can that is filled to the seamer machine where they put the juice and the cover. That's the only thing that was doing automatically and the other rest is being done all manually.

MK: How about the tidbits?

JS: That's what I talking about--the one that is scooped. They comes out long so that was run by hand scoop.

MK: Is that still by hand scoop?

JS: No, it's being done all modernized now.

MK: So, chunks and tidbits are modernized [now]?

JS: Yeah. The past three years, I think. They started it as usual.... New machines we have a lot of defects segments, we call it. Square pineapples, we call it segments. As the year went by, we had engineers come down. We used to do it all by hand but now we have a--they call it a oscillator machine.

The fruit it goes down on the belt. The girls push it down and it goes into the machine. It either cuts for tidbits or it could be cut for chunks. It goes on a big wide belt and that belt carries it to a filler. The filler will distribute whatever filler they need, whatever size they need. The 1-flat cans is the flat ones and the 2-tall cans and gallon chunks, the gallons. So it goes into the different fillers that has the different sizes of cans. After it's been filled to the regular weight then it's carried right straight to the seamer on the belt.

MK: When the chunk line and tidbit lines were modernized, what happened to the girls who used to do it manually?

JS: Well, they put them back on the table and they start eliminating workers from the table. Nineteen seventy-seven they started to have all these modernized things. Gradually they start cutting down manpower. Did away all the side work because for one thing, it's not machinery. Machinery is faster. When they found a machine that could do it good, then we ran all machines. So in the meantime, people was retiring. We need people to work but they don't hire intermittents but they hire covered seasonals to work. So what they do is like now, they only run chunks and tidbits. They don't need no packers for slices. The girls get to stay home or are loaned to different departments.

MK: So it's only recently, say, the 1970's that the chunks and tidbits were modernized?

JS: Yeah, I mean on the tables, yes.

MK: So in 1951, you were still doing it manually, huh?

JS: Manually, right. Nineteen fifty-one down to 1960-something, they were still doing it manually.

MK: How many women were involved in the tidbit and chunk lines when they were done manually?

JS: Well the chunks on the table---We usually have about five or six girls. Chunks on the table, but that goes down to the machine automatically. When did that start, I cannot remember but that was before the time that we walk out for Mrs. Dupont.

MK: Before 1957, then?

JS: Before 1957. I think was about 1956. We had about four tables, four tables running only chunks. Mrs. [Elizabeth] Matthews [another interviewee] was one of those that work on the chunk table. Mrs. Nona Chang [another interviewee], she worked on the chunks. But those days we were taking care only packing side. The trimmers were taking care only the trimming side. So on that chunk table we had about five or six girls. About six, I think it's six. That's where the table is that the pineapple doesn't have to be trucked to the workers. This is coming from the trimmers, goes through the slicer and goes straight down past chunks. They had

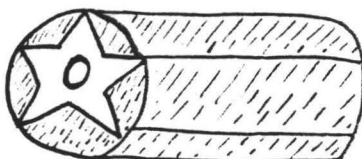
some of those tidbit workers on the tables but they needed the tables for slices pack so they have to rig up something on the side where they set up for tidbits.

When I went back in 1951, around 1955 I think, they were having this--I don't know if you remember--we had spears [i.e., oblong cuts of pineapple]. I forgot what year it was, but I know as the years were going by, we had spears. Then we had stars and bars but I cannot quote the year, now.

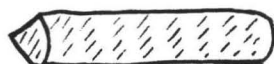
MK: Those were say in the 1950's?

JS: Was after the strike [1947], I think. Maybe when I went back 1951, it was there. I cannot be sure but we had spears. We had stars and bars. Cute. The pineapple come into stars, sliced but stars. The bars is, you know, (the remaining portion) when the stars is cutting out like that. The star part goes like this, yeah.

MK: Yeah, yeah.



Shaded portions of the cylinder constitute the "bars".



"bar"



sliced "stars"

JS: Well, that part of the pineapple is called bars. They have a machine that cuts the stars and the bars and it goes into the can. I forgot where they used to have it. Outside. Special they rig up a machine. Manually it's kind of slow to produce the amount of cans that's needed. With money-making thing it has to be plentiful in able to see the profit. So eventually, I don't know what year, but they did away with the stars and bars first. Then they did away with the spears.

MK: You know when these---the chunk line and tidbits were modernized and when the star and bar lines were dropped, what happened to the workers?

JS: They put them back on the tables. They used them. It's usable. I mean were able to use the bodies.

MK: So there were no fears of layoffs?

JS: No, no, it was no such thing as layoff. The only thing that they would have layoff is after summer's work. After summer's work and the summer workers is the one that they lay off. Most of the time it's the school kids. They lay off the school kids and if they need any, they keep the housewives to continue on working. But as far as modernizing all those machines, they didn't eliminate the workers, lay them off or anything.

MK: When you came back in 1951, that same time, were there any new rules or regulations that were different from, say, 1940?

JS: Well, when we went back to 1951 we did have the rules and regulations of everybody, safety, sanitation, drinking on the job and fighting on the job. I think most employment places has that rules and regulations. They tell you that is the rules and regulations and, what you call, they read it to you and they tell you what and what so that you know what it is, yeah. Safety meaning when you're trimming, how you handle the knife, running or horse-playing. Those are the things they're very very strict on that.

MK: How about jewelry wearing and...

JS: No earrings, no bobby pins, no chewing gums, no false eyelashes. Once upon a time, when people with glasses, we don't have them working at the end of the table. We were afraid that the glass might fall into the crush and they have to impound the pack. From the certain time before the pack, one hour or maybe one hour before and I don't know how many hours after. I mean, from one hour before and whatever went down, all those has to be thrown away. So that's why for a while, anybody that wears glasses cannot work at the end. They only go as far as second to the last girl and back they go up. We rotate a lot. But then gradually I see them people can work at the end. They (i.e., company) didn't come across any accident like that so they didn't make it compulsory that girls with glasses cannot work at the end. Another thing that they cannot use is contact lenses. That's a kapu. That's a no-no.

MK: Back in 1951, too?

JS: I didn't know about then, back then. See, when I became a forelady and reliever, then I realized but those days they didn't have contact lenses. But when we had contact lenses and then our management put that down, no contact lenses at all.

MK: Nineteen sixties and 1970's?

JS: Whenever, yeah, whenever the contact lenses came out and people were beginning to use it, that's when. When the years that they had such thing as false eyelashes, that's one of the thing that they was not to use. When we went back--like I say--1951 wasn't too bad. I think from 1955 on, we had to abide more on the rules and regulation. All the hair in the cap, no bobby pins to hold your hair up, no chewing gum.

MK: Why 1955 on?

JS: Well, that's what I can remember.

MK: Oh, oh, okay. No special thing about that date?

JS: No, no, no, no specific. I thought from that time on, I remembered. Mabel [Kozuki, head forelady] says so-and-so girl is chewing gum. So it must have been from earlier 1951. I don't know but it's just that my recognizing it could be around 1955.

MK: What would happen back then if a woman was caught chewing gum?

JS: Okay. When she's caught, the forelady's job is to go and tell her that she's not supposed to be chewing gum. Go and spit it out, okay. I think, we give them about two warnings. The third warning they go in the office. If the supervisor don't really need them on the table, they get suspended.

MK: For how many days?

JS: No, just for one day, just that one day they send them home. Just to make them understand that the rules is to be abide by them. The rules are put there to be followed, not to ignore, so that's what they do. But as far as bobby pin and hair coming out, we have the job of putting it in. We have the job of telling the girls to go upstairs, take your bobby pins off. False eyelashes is the same thing. That's the forelady's responsibility now.

MK: You mentioned drinking on the job. Was drinking ever a problem in the cannery?

JS: No, no. It's not exactly a problem. But there are some people before they come to work, they drink home so they come to work and then they being recognized as they have been drinking. Now if they're smart enough, they don't come to work. Stay away from coming to work because if they get caught under the influence of liquor, they get fired.

MK: No warnings?

JS: No warnings. They get fired because they read them the rules and regulations before they start working.

MK: Were there any regulations about drug use at that time?

JS: Drug use, it's still just as important as liquor drinking but earlier we didn't have too much of this. But afterwards, like I would say from 1965 on, we did have people coming in, under the influence of narcotics. I don't know how they can tell them but they could tell. The eyes, I think, glassy eyes and funny things that they do.



MK: Were those people that were under the influence of drugs, say, in the 1965 on, were they mostly the students or regular intermittent workers?

JS: Mostly seasonal workers. Whether they're students or not, I don't know. I quoted the year 1965 but I don't know how much, what you call, drugs were going around at that particular time. The time that the drug was going out very, very easily, very, very much, that's when we had few people coming in under drugs. In fact, last year they found some, too. But when they find them, they lay them off. They call the guards. The guards come get them and take them out because they can cause hazards.

MK: Uh huh. Are they laid off or fired?

JS: Laid off.

MK: Laid off. That's later, not the 1951 period?

JS: Yeah, no, not 1951 period. I don't think that 1951 period they had drug---I mean, maybe they did, but they were very afraid of using it. I would say the past 10 years, people weren't afraid to use drugs. They were just using drugs just like drinking beer. So that's when the thing was coming in the cannery quite a bit. That's mostly young people, though.

MK: In 1951 you were a forelady, yeah? You made forelady and you told me how the people who knew you from before treated you. They would say, "Hi, Julia" and then talk story with you. How about the foreladies who never knew you? How did they react to you when you came in and you made forelady?

JS: They made friends with me. I guess, when I first started as a white cap worker and I going on the forelady's table [i.e., become a forelady], some of them are really nice but some of them are rotten. [White cap refers to workers who have not yet been promoted to reliever or forelady status.] But my type is swallow the pride and do what you're told. But then I came across with some nice foreladies. They were really nice. They trained me to become a reliever and when they trained me to become a reliever, that first summer I went in, very pleasant, very nice. They say, "All you need is a lot of brush up because you work here before, you know the fundamentals so it's just the brush up."

I go like this, "Brush up, nothing doing, I cannot catch up with the pineapple."

"Oh, don't worry about it."

But it didn't take long after I went all through the must to train for supervisor. This was 1951. They had a routine training for supervisors that you go with. There's a forelady assigned to take you all different points of the cannery to teach. That's why I said, they have "specials," tidbits, scooping. You gotta go over

there and work before they qualify you. So you go over there and work maybe about one hour then you go to another position. You work another hour but this forelady is in charge of you. She's the one that taking you around and telling you what and what to do before you become a reliever. You have to be a reliever first. Okay, then after you're all done, she's the one that's going to grade you on your performance. They have such thing as performance.

MK: Oh. So this is 1951 when you became reliever? They trained you at the different tables?

JS: Right.

MK: You said about an hour at the tables?

JS: About that. If the forelady think you need more, she leave you. If she thinks you need only half an hour training, she uses her judgment but she was pressed for time. They needed the reliever pretty soon. We were going to run two shifts so she's pressed for time so whatever section she puts you in, she feels that you're doing a good job, she's going to take you and then put you on another place. You're doing a good job over there, she takes you.

But as you go along, you don't know what she's grading, that's confidential. Then after you finish, then she takes this report in and she gives it to the supervisor, the head forelady, that's Mabel. She (i.e., forelady) writes whatever she thinks, all her comments and all. Then it's up to Mabel to read the comments and there she decides whether this person is qualified to be a reliever.

That was a good training whereas the previous years before that we didn't have that kind. Was on your own kind. But, like I said, it was union too, huh, so it was a compulsory thing, I guess, with the labor law that to teach the people. Even the new hired seasonals come in, they teach them how to pack. They teach them how to trim, like that.

MK: I was wondering at this time were there opportunities to ask for a job and apply for a job?

JS: Yes.

MK: Like if you wanted to be a reliever, could you apply for it?

JS: Yes, yes, you could apply for it because they're going to go around and ask all the white caps who wants to go for training for reliever. At that time had relievers so what they do is they needed forelady, they put that reliever up to become a forelady. They get the one that's training to be reliever come in and take the reliever's place. That's how we go by step. We go by step to be recognized as a forelady.

MK: So the difference from 1940 to 1951 was that before there were no job postings for relievers and that relievers now were trained to be relievers. Were there any other differences between the time you were reliever before and the time that you were reliever in 1951?

JS: No, it was no difference performing the job. It was the same thing but only thing is at least you got to know certain type of work. Of course, 1940 they didn't have this tidbits thing. All they had was slices and crush -- "jam," they call it -- and the juice. I don't even remember having anything special. Funny kind cuts, you would say.

(Laughter)

JS: The skinny kind cut, the square kind cut, I didn't remember those. When I came back 1951, after that, then I remembered they had such thing as tidbits and I think chunks. Yeah, I went on chunks table to work. Then they had spears in the can. I remember that. Then they had the stars and bars but it was on a different area on the side. It was a manly thing [i.e., labor intensive] and maybe that's why they figured it was attractive but it wasn't money-making. The spears was making money but I think that restaurants were the only ones using the spears. Then they found out it's cheaper for them to buy fresh pineapple and make their own spears, I think. So I don't know how long it was and they did away with spears.

MK: So those were about the only differences that you recall?

JS: Yeah, right.

MK: Going back to how you became a reliever, I was wondering because of the new training and the job postings, was the favoritism situation that you mentioned earlier different then when you came back in 1951?

JS: Like 1951, to me, when they asked me to become a reliever, it's because they knew I was a forelady before when I left. So they thought that I had experience to be a forelady so they evidently gave me a chance. First they had asked me, you know, "You want to become a reliever."

I went like this, "Gee, I just came back to work, give me time. I can hardly keep up with the pineapple and you guys trying to give me another job."

They say, "But no, no, no, we need relievers with experience so we want you."

Then the forelady that's in charge she say, "Go, go, go, go try, you never lose nothing. Go, go, go try, you pass, you pass, you don't pass, that's all right." That's why I went.

But, you see, at 1951, I think the senioritywise was not very perfected then because the supervisor had her choice to pick who she wanted, I think. It was afterwards when we made designate foreladies. Just before that, the union made sure that they went according to senioritywise because the people with least seniority was making foreladies and relievers before those that have been working long time. Evidently, the problem had gone to the (union) unit and they (i.e., union) made it a point that they (i.e., company) follow according to the rules and regulations. They follow according to senioritywise.

The only thing that they (i.e., company) don't follow senioritywise is the section head. That's not labor, now, that's management's choice. Management's choice is who they think is a qualified person and they select that person.

MK: So you're saying that in 1951 even with the job postings and even with the reliever training and the grading, it still was favoritism?

JS: Yeah, I mean, that's what we felt. That's how we felt as workers. A lot of workers saw that because they themselves know I have more seniority than so-and-so. How come so-and-so is a forelady already. But you see evidently they [i.e., union] didn't clamp them [i.e., company] down yet, I think. Probably, I don't know. Union was new; 1948 union came in, yeah. When did union come in, 1948?

MK: Nineteen forty-six, came in.

JS: But when 1946 had union, evidently they weren't so strong. They weren't too strong and 1948 is when they went on strike.

MK: Nineteen forty-seven, yeah.

JS: Nineteen forty-seven, yeah. They went on strike, okay. They went on strike but evidently when they went on strike management needed them so I think they came to some kind of agreement. I don't know what that part. Then 1951 I know they were on a strike. But it wasn't that bad, 1951. I think it was 1958.

MK: It was 1968.

JS: Nineteen sixty-eight we had a long---we had a two weeks' ...

MK: No, you had a strike for 61 days.

JS: Sixty-one days, yeah, yeah, 1968 we had a long strike. That's the one. With that strike there and when we went back senioritywise was very, very distinct. Very. But like I said I have no proof that they were favoring, not following senioritywise. It's just a hearsay thing.

MK: Okay. Going back to 1951 time, huh, since this time when you returned to Dole you were a mother, yeah?

JS: Uh huh. [Yes].

MK: Did your conversations change?

JS: No.

MK: The conversations that you had with your workers and foreladies and other relievers?

JS: Same thing, work, tell them what they were supposed to do, what you're supposed to be doing and corrections. Then there are some that didn't like certain foreladies because I'm a reliever now, 1951.

This individual is very, very touchy and they say, "Oh, I'm going to slap that forelady on the face."

I go like this, "Oh, cool head." Then I go call the head forelady, not Mabel, but the other one, Katherine Andrade [assistant head forelady]. I call her. She takes the girl upstairs. She talks to the girl so the girl is so frustrated and she quits. She's young too so she quits but the following year, she comes back. She's back now as a regular. She's a very strong union steward. (Laughs) But she's a nice girl even though she's a union steward.

It's just that the way this forelady---what this forelady did to her hurt her feelings. The forelady was just partial, too, so she noticed the partiality. For the others she didn't do what she did to her, so, so that's why she was angry. She's Portuguese, so she was real angry and she wanted to paste the pineapple on the forelady's face. I grabbing her on the side and holding her and trying to tell her, "Cool head, cool head because if you do that you going get fired with a bad record." So she went upstairs to cry and I called one of our training foreladies, and I told her. I said, "Oh, so-and-so is upstairs and she's very, very hot, angry with so-and-so forelady. Go and see if you can cool her off." She did. The girl had decided to quit because she wasn't married then. But other than that, no, same.

MK: How frequent did that sort of incident...

JS: Not so often. That was one that happened when I'm around. Maybe other sections, other side, other tables happen, I don't know.

MK: You said that this girl quit but she returned later on?

JS: Not the same year, though, later years. I think about two or three years after that she came back.

MK: Did that incident remain on her record?

JS: No, because it didn't happen. She didn't fight or anything. You see, and this forelady is just like that. She's tough. She didn't even report the incident but I explained it to the forelady, the

one that takes trainees around, because this gal was one of the new trainees. She was just learning. Learning people you have to be patient otherwise they're going to be uptight. So when she got like that then I called the forelady that's training the new people that's coming in and I told her what happened. She [i.e., training forelady] went up and she talked to the girl and then she came back. She [i.e., training forelady] told me that she's [i.e., girl is] going to quit because she's uptight right now. She going to quit. So, she [i.e., training forelady] said, "Okay." But after several years after that, she, the girl, came back. That's the only incident I know happened. Other than that, the work is all the same. The working people, the friendship is the same. No change. Today it's still the same.

MK: Okay.

JS: (Laughs)

MK: Okay. What were the hardest things about coming back to work in 1951, besides the speed the first time?

JS: Nothing.

MK: Nothing was hard?

JS: No, uh uh.

MK: You weren't worried about your kids or anything while you were...

JS: No, because I know they were taken care of. My brother stayed with them until my husband came home. My brother goes to--at that time he goes to McKinley High School, so then summertime he doesn't work. When I came to look for job, he was home so when I leave to go to work, he stays with my children. Then when my husband gets off at 3:30 [p.m.], 4 o'clock [p.m.], he comes home. He carries over.

MK: Now I'm going to move on, okay? Nineteen fifty-three or 1954 you became a summertime forelady, is that right?

JS: I think so. Yeah.

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

MK: Can you please tell me how you became a summertime forelady?

JS: Before we become a forelady, there's several of us that our head forelady will take us into the office and tell us that we going to be forelady. They need foreladies and read out our duties and what and what we're supposed to do.



The duties are you're responsible for your table and that's only packing. You count the amount of girls that you need. Then we meet on the table. You see that they know what they're doing, how they're packing. Whoever is making mistakes, you correct their mistakes. Check on whatever the girls are packing and if she's making that much mistakes, then you correct her. In the meantime, you have a reliever on the table and if you feel that you need help by inspecting the cans, by instructing, teaching the individual, you have your reliever to help you do that. You tell the reliever that that girl needs help, her problem is this and her problem is that, and see if you can help her. You (the forelady) just go down your duty and you keep moving.

In those days we had trays, 1951 we had trays and 1953 I think we still had trays. And 1954. I don't know when, 1955 or 1956, that's when we have cans that come down [automatically] so we're able to inspect the cans more comfortably right in the front of the individual worker. That way we could correct the girl because she's the one that's packing in that can. That way we can correct her. She's not going to tell you that's not mine, that's somebody else's. That's what we do. It's a routine thing. You just keep moving.

MK: At that time was there any training to be a seasonal forelady?

JS: Still yet, same (as training for relievers). But we didn't have to go to the training. Only thing they take us in the office and tell us our duties to become a forelady is a little different than a reliever. The reliever has her duties and you have your duties. Now you're a forelady, you are the responsible person for the table. Whatever happens on the table, anybody get hurt or anything like that, they have to ask us and we have to have an answer.

MK: Why is it that you didn't have to be trained?

JS: The training of the forelady is going to be similar to the way the reliever is being trained, exactly. The only thing is you have a top responsibility.

MK: I notice you foreladies have to work with their relievers. Do you get to choose your own reliever? No? So...

JS: They're assigned, yeah, the relievers. They tell you, "You go to so-and-so table." On that table they have a so-and-so reliever.

MK: Looking back on your experience, did you ever have any times when you didn't get along with your reliever as well as you would have liked to?

JS: Well as far as relievers, I had good cooperating relievers. I had no problem with them but as far as the forelady when I was a reliever, I had a stinker (Laughs) lousy forelady. I mean---to me, she was a lousy forelady. If I was a forelady, I wouldn't do

to a reliever the way she was doing. Maybe that's why I became a good forelady because she would just tell me like this, "You see this mistake, you go over and tell the girl what mistake is this, why it is a mistake."

Now, that is not the way a forelady should be talking to a reliever. If she finds a mistake from that girl, right then and there she is to correct the girl, not bringing on the side and tell the reliever, "Look you go tell the girl what's wrong with these slices." That's her place to tell the person that her errors. Whatever she's packing, why it's not a fancy and why it's not a choice, or whatever. That's a forelady's job to do but she doesn't. She brings all the big stack of errors to me and put it on the table like this... (Mrs. Souza bangs on the table once, then stops)

"Julia, you see that girl over there, you go and tell her what different slices this is, what errors are those." What is she (i.e., forelady) trying to do, trying to find out whether I know my work. That's the attitude I feel. Whenever you find a mistake from a person, you correct that person right then and there. You don't wait for a while and go and look for me and tell me, "Oh, go down there and correct that girl."

You're the forelady of the job but I want to keep peace. I don't want to get angry. I'm the type that get angry very fast. But, when I work at the cannery, I sort of calm myself down. I humble myself. I say this person is my boss so I'm going to do what she tell me to do. So I take the mistakes---I have to go through it to see what's wrong and then go down there and tell the girl why it's not a fancy, why it's not a choice or whatever it is. That's a forelady's job. I didn't last too long with her. Oh, that whole summer I was with her and she gave me a lousy grade. That's why I didn't come up to become a forelady early. You see, performance grade. The head forelady going ask....

MK: Mrs. Souza, you just told me that you got a lousy grade from her. How do you know you got a lousy grade?

JS: Because I was one of those that became forelady later than the others.

MK: Ah, so you knew from that?

JS: I mean, that's my assuming but I think it. That's what I think and I'm not the only one that she gives poor grading but she comes around....She has a reliever that she likes, she give her a good grade. Then we can see, you know. Human nature, you have that feeling so you can see. I know that she gave me a lousy grading and then there's another forelady that I went to and she gave me a lousy grading too. But other than that, the other foreladies that I worked after that, they were really good. But you see, they take the performance from the forelady that you worked with. Me being that I got two lousy foreladies I came up for forelady late, you know, not too early.

MK: Oh. So at that time, there was still an element of favoritism in that...

JS: Yeah, to me I think...

MK: Oh, was there anything you could have done to get onto the good side of these foreladies?

JS: No, no I don't think. No matter what you do. See, one thing is I don't believe in is bribing the people, you know what I mean. I don't believe in that so I figured if they're not satisfied with whatever I'm doing, they do whatever they want. I figured they do whatever they want.

MK: Were there incidents of bribery?

JS: That's what I heard but I don't, I have no proof.

MK: What kind of things have you heard, even if you don't have no proof?

JS: Yeah, I have no proof. Well, they say they'd buy something and they give that certain, maybe candy or maybe gifts, and stuff like that. But you don't see it, so you can't prove it. I hear about it but that's all. But other than that, I don't know.

MK: Were there any regulations saying that you're not supposed to give gifts to foreladies?

JS: No, they have regulations. No gifts at all. Foreladies, supervisors, anybody, no gifts at all. But they do it under cover.

MK: (Laughs) Oh. How was your 1953 or 1954 seasonal forelady experience different from the time you were forelady in 1938, 1939 when you were a seasonal forelady back then?

JS: Oh, the job performance of the table was different from 1939. The girl [in 1954] packs the whole cylinder herself. She discard crush material, packs the B's, pack the choice, pack the fancy.

MK: That was the only difference you saw?

JS: Yeah, that's the only differences that I found, you know, being a forelady. It's not like the years before.

MK: The hours were still about the same?

JS: Yeah, to me the hours were the same but there were times that we worked all night. Because we have eight hours (one night) and then we have all night [the second night] and then we have eight hours (another night) what year it is, I not going be able to tell you.

MK: Would you know, say, about how many months you were working during these early 1950's?

JS: Oh, we worked almost all year around.

MK: Almost all year around.

JS: We even work Christmas time. The only time we don't work at least around February, I think, no, wait, wait, wait, no around March or April. We don't work for about two weeks or one month and then after that we're prepared to go back again in the summer. We work all year around. There was no such thing, what you call, as stay home for six months like the way we doing now.

MK: So how many days per week did you go in?

JS: We usually go in around Tuesday, Wednesday, like that, Thursday, Friday. Sometimes we work about three or four days a week. We made good hours.

MK: At that time were you getting unemployment compensation, not yet?

JS: Uh uh. Not yet.

MK: Were there any difficulties in that 1953, 1954 time that you encountered, you know, in the cannery with people or with the work itself?

JS: No, no.

MK: Now this time when you were seasonal forelady, you worked with a lot of students, yeah?

(Interruption by third party)

MK: So you worked with a lot of students, yeah?

JS: Yeah, yeah.

MK: Was this working with the student experience different from when you were seasonal forelady before in 1938, 1939?

JS: The students?

MK: Yeah.

JS: Yeah, I think they're much smarter.

(Laughter)

JS: What you call, no, no, no, not much difference. No, I don't find anything different. Only thing like you have to be with them a little more because the way of packing is different from 1939. They (i.e., each person) supposed to be packing [all of the slices

from] a whole cylinder now. It's not only choice, or only fancy, see.

MK: So was this work performance way harder than before?

(Interruption by numerous poundings and other people in the room)

JS: No, not much.

MK: Did you like it [the 1953-1954 seasonal forelady experience] more than your reliever experience?

JS: I like it, yeah, I did because I'm responsible for my table myself and I, what you call, run it the way I want. If there's anything wrong with it, it would be my fault, not somebody else. I think I like it. Yeah, yeah, because you're running your table and you know you have your own responsibility of the table. You get your workers and you make good workers out of them. If they keep coming back to you, you don't have to work hard.

MK: At that time were the workers assigned to your table or ...

JS: You don't have such thing as assigned, they just come to your table. Lots of them they'll try and bypass the foreladies that they don't like. They'll come to the forelady's table that they want. We used to have a lot of girls on the table so it wasn't hard enough to place them on your table because we have quite a bit then. Maybe there's some stragglers come down. They come down too late so they have to fill in on the other tables. But the head foreladies will do that. If you have enough workers on your table, she'll come and get the extra workers and take them to the tables that need workers.

MK: So at that time, if a worker wanted to be on your table, would they have to come in early?

JS: They had to come in early, but lots of them, they come in, if no more room on this table they'll jump to the other table. Yeah, they do that because the majority of the foreladies are good. There's few not too good, but majority of them good.

MK: Was seniority a factor in choosing workers? Could a more senior forelady have first pickings?

JS: No, not that time. No, no.

MK: Not yet. Okay. You know, in 1956 the union included a clause in one of their contracts, you know, about work opportunity for intermittents and regulars, how did that affect you?

JS: Well, it didn't affect me much because I was...

MK: You were still a seasonal forelady.

JS: Yeah, I was still a seasonal forelady so it didn't---I don't think it affect me much. Nothing much.

MK: You know that clause, which people did it affect the most, then?

JS: For the senioritywise (i.e., ones with more seniority).

MK: This clause said that intermittents and regulars should be given...

JS: Job opportunities...

MK: ...job opportunities to work when things were slow.

JS: Well, the job opportunity that you're asking is when they have a job opening, then any individual could apply for it but the job opportunities be in different departments. Maybe you want to better yourself and go to the different departments.

Like myself, I figured out I not going to go any other places. I'd rather remain in the cannery and do what I'm doing every year. Be a forelady during the summer; white cap, non-season, until the time that they make designate forelady. I think the designate forelady was 1958, right?

MK: Yeah, you told me 1957.

JS: I mean, was 1957 (designate forelady) was started out. About 1957 then I made like an all-year-around forelady. They make 28 designate foreladies for a fact and then after the 28, they get anybody (with the next highest) seniority. (But, the company call in or make additional foreladies only after they call the 28 foreladies first.) So I was one of the 28 foreladies to be a designate forelady. As one forelady go out, another forelady will come in and be a designate, see, so as the years went by, some died, some retired, some got sick so it kept on moving. The senioritywise kept filling in, filling in. We had up to 28. Now we have, gee, I don't know about how much, 24, 26 but we had designate foreladies as labor grade 4 up to (1968). When they changed the forelady responsibility (so that foreladies watch both sides-- trimming and packing), then they changed to labor grade 5. (Labor grade 5 have more pay than labor grade 4. Designate foreladies don't get loaned to different departments because we have to get our labor grade pay.)

MK: This is about the now time?

JS: The now time, the regulations. So at that particular time, they have this job posting like you said. These are for the different departments that individual like to give it a try. Like, for instance, a Yale [forklift] driver. You can go and apply for the job.



MK: That's now?

JS: No, that was from the job posting time. What year did you say?

MK: I said---this is 1956 when they said that when there is work available, you should first go to intermittents and regulars and offer them an opportunity to work.

JS: Yeah, yeah I see. I didn't understand that part. Yeah. Yeah, we do get the opportunity to work before they hire anybody else to come in, yeah. Is that what you mean?

MK: Yeah.

JS: Yeah, right.

MK: In 1956, you got that [work opportunity clause].

JS: Yeah. It has to be the regulars first and then the intermittents. Then if they don't have any more workers, and they need workers then they get seasonals.

MK: Did that in any way affect you?

JS: No.

MK: You didn't notice any difference from before time?

JS: No difference, no.

MK: Going on, you became designated forelady in 1957 or 1958...

JS: Around there.

MK: Around there? Can you first tell me what is a designated forelady? You told me what a designated forelady is now. What was she back in...

JS: Same.

MK: Same?

JS: Well, back in 1957, 1958, a designated forelady is being recognized that they are to hold the position, a labor grade 4, that's what we're designate for, a labor grade 4. I mean we are to be forelady all the time providing they have enough tables running. The least seniority is going to be regular packer and the ones above is going to be forelady all the time. Then if the 28 designate foreladies is all being used up, then they get the next in line senioritywise to come up as forelady. As far as the responsibilities, it's the same, same as the regular forelady. It's only the recognition of holding the position as a labor grade 4 designate.

MK: So is it from about that time that people became more aware of so-and-so being number 1, so-and-so being number 2, so-and-so being number 17 forelady?

JS: Well, yeah. You see, the union has the set up and they watch it closely so that nobody goes above the ones that should be above. We don't know who's who. We only know who we follow. What number, we never did know. Only recently because I'm concerned to find out whether I'm working tomorrow or not I have an idea I'm number so-and-so forelady. But that's the designate 4. I know who I follow so it's just the idea that we gotta go work. So-and-so is working; we gotta go work. That's the only thing that we go according to number. What forelady is this, number 1 forelady, like that.

MK: Oh, so that's the more recent...

JS: Yeah. This is a recent thing that we get into ourself to recognize who and who follow who because they have the amount of tables to run. As needed, foreladies, they get to go in. That's why we try---we rather stay home than going to work. (Laughs) Spoiled.

MK: So this situation was not existing, say, in 1957? You folks didn't say, "Oh, that's so-and-so... [number 2 forelady, etc.]

JS: Yeah, right, right. I don't think we even give it a thought till the past year. (Laughs)

MK: Oh, oh, okay. How did you get this job, designated forelady?

JS: Well, we---at that time when you come back, they supposed to be going according to seniority. But as far as pressing the issue being a seniority, at that time we didn't really realize that it was in the picture. But according to the roster in the office, they have that [seniority list]. That's how they supposed to pick up [i.e., select] the foreladies. The management, they go according to senioritywise for foreladies. Only when they need section heads, management pick their choice.

MK: So when you became designated forelady, management went down a seniority list and asked you?

JS: That's what I think.

MK: Oh, okay. You mentioned that around that time you had a special training session that was originally set up by Dee Dupont but taught by a Mr. [Robert] Tom?

JS: Well, Mrs. Dupont wanted to have sort of a training program for all the foreladies so that they (i.e., foreladies) would have the same procedure in training the individual, that's right. Then Mr. Tom took all [foreladies], so many periodically go to the Sky Room of Dole. We have a Sky Room at Dole and there we went step by step the procedure of training new workers. If I'm not mis-

taken, everybody that was working had to go up to this Sky Room to be taught by Robert Tom.

MK: The workers included packers, trimmers...

JS: Packers, trimmers. I think it's the packers and trimmers.

MK: Foreladies?

JS: Foreladies.

MK: Even section heads?

JS: Yeah, the section heads but not Mabel [Kozuki, head forelady]. They're not the ones. But the other ones--the section heads and, what you call, during the summer kind section heads. They all had to go too. It's a program that I guess Mrs. Dupont wanted to set up but we already started with a training program anyway from 1951 that showed the girls what and what you're supposed to do. We had that already and we had the procedures step by step. They call it, "the step-by-step training." We have a card issued to us trainers. We are the trainers.

MK: You are the trainers?

JS: Yeah, when I'm a white cap, I'm a trainer so I go help. They say, "You and you go train the new girls," before I become a forelady. I become a forelady then I don't train anybody. So, we had that thing but to me, I think was time wasted to go and sit down in the Sky Room for about an hour and come back downstairs again, because we already had it. That's part of something that Mrs. Dupont wanted to make an issue about.

MK: So this training was similar to the [reliever] training that you were given in 1951 and it was similar to the forelady training that you had received earlier [in 1939] too?

JS: Right, right, similar.

MK: What were your duties as the designated forelady? The same as the regular forelady?

JS: Right. Right. Same, same. It's only the title.

MK: Okay. Was this forelady position any different from the 1940 forelady position?

JS: Well, it is. Same thing like when I told you when we came in 1951. From 1951 on, it's not what it's like now, although we have...

MK: You mean the packing procedures?

JS: Yeah, the packing procedures is the same (as in 1951). Even now, it's [i.e., grading of pine slices] still the same.

MK: You know, since by now [1951] the union has come in, were your relations with the workers any different from the pre-union time?

JS: No. Same.

MK: So a forelady had as much freedom to do and say as she wished?

JS: Yes, as long as she keep her language barrier, not getting vulgar. Treating the people like human beings, you don't have problems but if you step beyond that, then the person that you attacking is going to feel hurt and she's going to turn and tell the heads. She don't have to be a union person but she's a person and this is not because I'm a union or she's not a union. This is not etiquette for a forelady to do. That's not a forelady's responsibility, I mean, way of training or working with the individual, no. We do get vulgar people. We have to turn them in regardless it's not no union thing. It's the company policy.

MK: By this time you had stewards so if workers had complaints, they would go to their stewards?

JS: Stewards and stewards goes to the office and talk to the management. We still have that.

MK: Did having stewards in any way affect your working as a forelady?

JS: No, not to me. No, I just do the same way like I did 1953 or 1954 and I still do it the same way now.

MK: How about other foreladies who had worked pre-union time and post-union time?

JS: Well, we...

MK: Was there any acting differently?

JS: No, I think the action is not different. Only that we have some forelady that is not in the union. They still is not in the union but to me, I think their attitude is this. They don't really have to join the union and but they do their work just like I do my work, same thing. But I think, their attitude is because they haven't been pressured to join the union previous years until came to, I don't know what year is that. Regardless of whether you are a union member or not, they're still taking out dues and that dues is supposed to go to some kind of charity, something like that. We have few of them like that. When we on strike, they go in. Those are the things we are kind of pissed off because here we are, out there trying to do a good benefit for us. Here they go in there to work and then they get the same privileges like us. But, there's nothing we can do about it.

MK: I think I'll ask you more about the union situation later on but...

JS: So that, that part, no difference.

MK: No difference. During that time, 1957, 1958 did seniority come into play when it came to privileges of foreladies? Was this the time when you could pick your workers?

JS: When was this?

MK: Nineteen fifty-seven, nineteen fifty-eight when you were a designated forelady.

JS: No, they all came to the table, you know, freely.

MK: Oh.

JS: You don't really pick them but they come to the table. What I do is anybody walking down and I say, "Come, come, I need one," and they just come in, that's all. We don't exactly pick, but we just tell them to come. It's not, "Oh, I don't want you," you know, "But I want you." No, no, we just pick the amount of girls that we had. We still do that today, same thing.

MK: You were telling me that when [1957] you were designated forelady, there was a walkout, right, revolving around Mrs. Dee Dupont? Can you tell me whether you walked out? Did you walk out?

JS: Well, we were stopped by the gate. They (i.e., other workers) told us not to go in but they had told us that we were supposed to have a meeting. Mrs. Dupont was supposed to come to that meeting and I guess she was calling our bluff. She didn't come to that meeting and our unit management, manager, this Al Mattos. He said that if she don't come to the meeting, we not going to go in. Everybody going to stay out. I think she thought that we were only talking. When we came to work in the morning, because I come to work about 5:30 [a.m.], quarter to six [5:45 a.m.], we had our people out by the gates telling us, "We were not going in because Mrs. Dupont is just calling our bluff." She thinks we're not going to stay out so we did stay out.

MK: Can you tell me what the problem was? What exactly were the workers' grievances that led to wanting the meeting, then the walkout that followed because there was no meeting?

JS: Well, it's because Mrs. Dupont was doing lot of things that she was just taking upon herself to change. Yet we had our own head forelady and she's been there for years now.

(Telephone rings. Taping stops, then resumes.)

JS: All I know that she [Dee Dupont] was getting out of hand and to remember what and what she did off hand, what you call, I cannot

get the right thing. But it was getting little bit too much. We think she wasn't recognizing our head, our head forelady, which has been there for years. See, Mrs. Dupont's work was to be in the office, not to come out and tell the people how to work. She hasn't been with them (i.e., foreladies) long enough to come out and tell them how to work. She want them (i.e., foreladies) to be bosses, to walk around without gloves. You cannot work without gloves. You have to have gloves.

MK: She didn't want the foreladies to wear gloves?

JS: Yeah, she didn't want the foreladies to have gloves so they took one glove away from the foreladies. You see, they think the foreladies were doing too much but I don't think they were doing too much because if the fruit is getting too much for the girls, the forelady helps the girls. For one thing, it's better than have waste. That's the forelady's intention when she's touching fruit and working on it but she [Dee Dupont] took away the glove and we had to be with only one hand glove and then actually Mabel [Kozuki, head forelady] didn't know. To me I think Mabel didn't know what was going on, so that's what we thought. She [Dee Dupont] was getting out of hand.

MK: You mentioned that she was trying to change a whole lot of things?

JS: Yeah.

MK: What other changes did she try?

JS: Well, that one I won't be able to tell you which.

(Interruption by other persons in the room)

MK: So from what you remember, it was because she wanted to change the foreladies' jobs?

JS: The foreladies' duties or whatever. She had an idea of her own that she wanted us to do. But I cannot say actually what and what. I forget what it was. At that moment, you know what it was but right now the details, I don't know. I cannot say it.

MK: You know, I read that 600 women walked out. How did 600 women organize a walkout? How did they do it?

JS: Oh, it's easy. All they do is stay by the main gates, all the gates. There they tell the cars not to go in and meet at a so-and-so place. At that time, the community college [Honolulu Community College] had a big area over there. That's where the people went, by the community college. After they met at the community college and we had our answer, then we all went to the ILWU Hall and there we remained. Then the supervisors, of course, they were trying to run the cannery and things like that.



MK: So you really didn't walk off the tables? You just did not report to work?

JS: We didn't go in. Yeah, nobody reports to work. Al Mattos is our (union) business agent, see, so whenever he sees things that is not going right, he said, "This is being happening to our people so what we doing now, we not going in, we staying out." That's what it was.

MK: Six hundred women walked out. Was that the majority of the working force at that time?

JS: Well, I guess so. I wouldn't know the amount of the people. I wouldn't know the amount of the people because everybody, trimmers, packers, tray boys, truckers, they all stayed out. Even the timekeepers stayed out. Everybody stayed out.

MK: For people who stayed in, how did you and the other walkout people feel towards the people who stayed in?

JS: Oh, well, we felt--we didn't like the idea but there was nothing we can do. They drove in. They went in. They went to work. There was few of them. Quite a bit of them went in. I don't know, six or eight. I know four of them. I know three of them. I knew three, definitely but the other rest, some of them went in.

MK: What were your feelings towards those that went in?

JS: Well, you know what you say when anybody on strike and you go in, everybody used to call them (i.e., the non-supervisory personnel, the workers) "scabs", huh. Well, that's what the people were saying, "Oh, look at that scab went in." But that's all.

In other words, we were more concerned about ourselves and what we were doing and getting something for it.

MK: What did you get for the walkout?

JS: We were supposed to be suspended, yeah, but we went back to work because that day about 11:00 [a.m.], 11:30 [a.m.], we were called back to work. So when we went in, we were all willing to take suspension but they cannot suspend us because they need us to work. So they call off the suspension. They told us that they weren't going to suspend us. Somehow, some legality, or whatever it was worked into it. We had the word that they weren't going to suspend us but when we went back in, then everybody said we going get suspended. We knew what we were doing. If we're going to get suspended, then we going get suspended. But then all the legal procedures that they had gone through, then they say we weren't going to be suspended.

MK: So when you returned, how were relations between the scabs and you folks?

JS: Well, what we were mostly concerned was to get the things running smoothly so we didn't think anything about the scabs because the thing was such a mess. Everything was running a mess. See, what they were trying to do---the timekeepers were downstairs, head timekeeper, was trying to run (machinery). Once upon a time he used to run, at that time, he wasn't able to do it, see.

That's why a lot of waste, in other words. They were trying to run without workers but they couldn't. So finally they decided to get the workers back and they said they were going to fire Mrs. Dupont.

MK: Was she fired?

JS: I think she voluntarily quit.

MK: Did things return back to when she wasn't there?

JS: We had our gloves back. We ran the tables the way we always ran. We didn't want to change the way we were working. We worked with it so many years, why should we change for her only for a short while.

MK: This was your first walkout, yeah?

JS: I think so.

MK: Yeah, yeah. What were your feelings toward it being your first walkout? I mean, how did you know how these things worked?

JS: We didn't know. Once in a while we have a, what you call, a representative come in and telling us what's going on. Other than that, we don't know. We just figure well we see what benefit can we get so we just stuck with each other, with everybody. Then we have somebody that comes around, tell us this is that, this is that.

MK: So you follow that person?

JS: Yeah, you follow them. No, not follow them but we know what's going on. We don't follow. We stay where we are.

MK: You know in 1958, 1000 cannery workers staged a two-day walkout because they didn't like the cannery schedules. They were going to call people in to work on Saturday. Do you remember that walkout?

JS: No, I don't remember that. Maybe....I don't remember that. Nineteen what?

MK: Nineteen fifty-eight, a two-day walkout.

JS: Oh, yes, yes, yes. They had 1958 but was it a two-day?

MK: Yes, just two days, walkout because of their protesting the cannery schedule calling them to work on Saturday.

JS: Was it Saturdays?

MK: Yeah.

JS: Oh. But I don't remember that part. I won't be able to tell you more about that but I know they did, yeah. They did have a walk-out but what it was all about, I really don't know.

MK: Oh. Okay. You know it seems that sometimes you don't know too much about walkouts or what was happening about union-related things, was that true for most of the workers, too, do you think?

JS: Some of them knew. Some of them know because whenever they hear something, they always go over there and try to get information. Usually we have flyers that come to the people. What and what they plan to do but most of them, they know what's going on though. Well, you see we have stewards and they supposed to relay the messages to us. But like that two days, I cannot remember what it was all about.

MK: Okay. During the 1950's were there any other problems in the cannery that you can recall?

JS: No.

MK: Maybe I'll stop over here and then next time....

JS: Okay.

END OF INTERVIEW

Tape No. 6-37-4-79

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Julia Souza (JS)

April 16, 1979

Kuliouou, Oahu

BY: Michiko Kodama (MK)

MK: Interview with Mrs. Julia Souza on April 16, 1979 at her home in Kuliouou.

To start today's interview, first of all, I want to know what you were doing during the 1968 strike.

JS: Nineteen sixty-eight strike, I was with the strike force--with the medical unit. This, we go out and collect the medical insurance that is to be paid by each individual person so that their medical [insurance payments] will be up-to-date. While they working, the company pays so much percentagewise and you pay so much. But when you're on a strike, you ought to cover your medical by yourself--full-covered medical. So, those that had already paid their medical, we didn't have to follow up. But only those that didn't pay their medical, we had to get after them. In the meantime we log it. We check on the names and the list, and who need to be follow up. Then we have candidates go out and [tell] them that---they have to pay. Otherwise, if they go to the hospital, they have to be paying on their own--the insurance won't cover it.

MK: You were telling me that you were picketing, too?

JS: Yes, we do picket early in the morning. The purpose of going down early, so that we have place to park the car. Otherwise there's no place to park the car. I had several other women with me. We pool ride. We go down early in the morning. We leave home about 5:30, and we start in the line from 6:00 until 7:30 or 8:00. Then we leave the line. There's sort of a little station--office like. They have other people [there] doing other work. We sit in there and we follow up. After that, we go out and look for the people and have the people pay their medical.

MK: Then, couple years later, in 1974, there was another strike. What did you do during that strike?

JS: That strike, what I did was just go on the picket line. We go on

the picket line for about two hours. We did our share, then we go home. In other words, they have groups coming in, I think, from 6 o'clock to 7, 7 to 8. But we like to go early in the morning--6 o'clock is cool. So we go and picket with the same ladies that I have with me. We go together and we do our share. We picket for about an hour. Sometimes we stick around a little longer--sit around and talk. But each individual people come and picket an hour a day--they were asked to come out an hour a day. That's all I did. I didn't do much after that.

MK: What were your feelings about both of these strikes?

JS: The first strike, it had to be something---because the company didn't want to give us. I think it was a retirement benefit. If I'm not mistaken, they had a retirement paid by the people which we called that, "annuity." The strike committee asked for a better retirement system. Actually, the committee had laid out what they wanted or else. So, the thing came was severance pay. I think it was about that time. I could be wrong, but anyway, severance pay. So they did away with the annuity. Whatever money you had put in for annuity, they gave it back to each individual worker. Then they went on this severance pay--(it's based on) the amount of years that you had, you retire or whatever. I won't be able to tell you how you get it in percentagewise, but that's how people were getting their money from the company. Actually it's the company's---labor law, I think, that they got to cover the workers with some kind of insurance--some kind of retirement. That's all I could remember.

Well, they had lot of different things---like for instance, seniority, posting the jobs. Sometimes they don't post the jobs so that everyone see it. You know, so that they can apply for it [i.e., a job] especially when it's a higher labor grade. A person [that] has been working there long enough could apply for it. Those were one of the things that they worked out because the previous years, they didn't work out things like that. They were still having people holding position because the management think that they're better workers or, maybe, I don't know, it could be favorite or whatever. They didn't go according to the way the union wanted it to be run--senioritywise, for one thing. The person is qualified, but they haven't been approached.

I'm not wording it right, (but) I know that--the union did cover something really good at that 1968 strike. The 1974 strike, shee, I cannot even remember what it was all about.

MK: For both of these two strikes, when you went on strike, you had no income coming in? So, how did you manage? Was it hard on your family?

JS: No, it wasn't that bad--for me it wasn't bad--because my husband, at that particular time, he's a supervisor at the City and County [of Honolulu] so whatever he brought home, we managed. But there

were other families who got hit real bad because both husband and wife were working (for the cannery).

The 1968 strike, they made provision--they call it, "food basket." They issued out food basket. There's a card that you have and you could present it to the people. They get you your food basket, whatever it is--meat, chicken, fruits, rice, bread, can goods. That's at least something that you could live on. That's we had. Maybe it (the strike) didn't hit certain people, but still, it [i.e., food distribution] was not enough. But at least the folks had something to rely on--the food.

The 1974 (strike)---I don't know whether we had food provision. Maybe they did, but I didn't accept it because I thought I managed with my husband's earning. Whereas those others that has husband and wife working there [i.e., cannery] need the provision more than I did. So, I didn't accept it because I thought I managed with my husband's earning. Whereas those others that has husband and wife working there [i.e., cannery] need the provision more than I did. So, I didn't accept the food that was coming from the (union) unit.

MK: I'm going to change to another topic. You were telling me that you worked off-season, first at Hawaiian Host Candies in 1960, and then, Liberty House as a marker in 1961 and in 1963. I was wondering, why did you decide to go work off-season? You didn't do that before?

JS: Yes. Well, before, we didn't have such thing as a lull. We usually work right through (the year)--cannery. If we start January, February, they'd be--about March or April--two weeks without working, and then we go back again to work. We work right through summer. Of course, during the summer they have the two shifts. At that particular time, we used to have two shifts only. During the summer--from June when the schoolchildren come in--that's when we have two shifts on the intermittents until around August. Only the school students is the one that we had three shifts. [The intermittents worked one of two long shifts; the students worked one of three shorter shifts.] We [i.e., intermittents] worked right through until December. So, you need not go out and look for work. In fact, we don't use up our partial pay [i.e., unemployment] compensation. The benefits was only \$25 a week, but we didn't get to use it because we were hardly off.

But when we came to 1960 when I went to work for the Hawaiian Host and Liberty House, it's because my sons were going to college. Then the cannery started to close down. When they started to close down, we didn't have enough compensation because they were only issuing out the summer benefits. The summer benefits is only three months and you don't have anymore. So, it was kind of hard when you have children going to college. I thought I had to go look for work before my children started to go to college. That way, I worked [elsewhere] for three months--that's October, November,



and December. With that three months the compensation of the following year would come out a little longer. Whereas when we weren't working and you use the compensation, the money exhausted so fast and you don't have it.

As my children was getting older, they need help to go to college. My oldest boy was going to LA [Los Angeles] City College after he came back from the Coast Guard. Then my second son went to New York Maritime State College when he graduated from Kamehameha School, 1962. My youngest son graduated Kamehameha School, 1963. Then he went to college in Minnesota. So, even though we had loans from the school, we still had to provide their living. That's why I thought I'd go look for work at that particular time.

MK: You were telling me that Hawaiian Host liked hiring pineapple workers. Why is that?

JS: The cannery closes at September so they [i.e., Hawaiian Host Candies] hired pineapple workers. Then when it comes to December--when they [i.e., Hawaiian Host Candies] let them go--I guess the boss won't feel bad that he's laying off the girls that he doesn't need. During that time he has about two shifts. The two shifts need to produce as much candies as they can for the holidays. So when he doesn't need them, he don't feel guilty laying them off.

It's the same thing with the Liberty House, the same thing. They like to hire cannery workers. This is the remark that I heard the bosses from Liberty House say--that the cannery workers are very, very aggressive. They're [i.e., cannery workers are] hard workers and they move fast. That way, they [i.e., Liberty House] can have their merchandise moving faster. That's why they like to keep cannery girls working with them as much as they can. We (cannery girls) always tell them, "You don't need us, don't be afraid. Lay us off."

Then they say, "Oh, if I lay you all off now, will you come back and work as regular?"

At that time I was working for Liberty House, I worked for Dole for 15 years and being a section head during the summer. I explained that to the supervisors of Liberty House. They said that would be foolish to give up working for Dole and then work for Liberty House.

As things went on and on, maybe it would have been better that I quit Dole and work for Liberty House. But at that time, I didn't think pineapple production would change as it is now.

MK: Why do you say that maybe it would have been better if you did quit?

JS: Well, I was younger for one thing. To me, now, where I see the situation is, I wouldn't advise any young person to keep on working

for pineapple if they have a chance to go out and better themselves. When I said, "Maybe it would have been better for me to work for Liberty House," I would have been a little better, I guess. The benefits that they had at Liberty House is--to me, I think it's much better--than the pineapple for us, especially--intermittents. Our benefits for Dole, for the pineapple, is not as good in comparison to maybe Penney's and Liberty House. Their benefits is very good what I heard after. There were lot of cannery girls quit cannery and went to work for Liberty House.

MK: So you're talking about Liberty House having better medical benefits and retirement provisions?

JS: Right, right. And they have this profit sharing. At that time I was young. If I made up my mind to go work--it would have been better even though I had that much years in Dole. But I thought, shee, working for the pineapple, I had time to stay home and take care my house and time to relax. I didn't think about [i.e., care for] working every day.

But I wouldn't advise anybody that's just starting in their work to work as a pineapple packer or as a pineapple trimmer although money is good now, the wages are high. If they could go out and look for better work, it's better [that they seek other work] because pineapple, you don't work every day.

Right now they have such thing as loaning the workers to different departments. They loaning the people now since the past two, maybe three years now. Cannery's not working, they get the cannery workers that not working now and have them work in different departments like the fresh fruit, can storage, and frozen. They won't be paying them compensation, see?

But then they'll ask you to come second or third shift and some people cannot work second shift or third shift because of transportation. According to what I hear now, the transportation bit has to be really important, otherwise they [i.e., workers] not going to get the benefit for the week--the compensation. Some of them, they say, "Well, I don't want to go work second or third shift because I have no transportation." So they forfeit the compensation of that week. But then, it's not fair. It's not fair, but that's company policy because they [i.e., the company] were told, "How come they don't have enough working hours for the workers?" The union people went to fight for the workers, but this is what they did. So now, you cannot say anything. We, as union members, cannot say nothing. In other words, it [i.e., union] says it's a job offering.

I'm a designated forelady. A designated forelady, they have to get a forelady's job for me and then, they call me to go into work other department. [But] in Preparation Department, they'll call me to come to work providing they need trimmers, and all the trimmers are working, and seasonals are working. Whenever seasonals are

working, they have to offer us [designated foreladies] a job. Not as a forelady, but as a trimmer. It's up to the individual if they want to go in. I usually go in and trim because I feel that is going to count the hours for my compensation and for my vacation pay. So I accept the job and I go into work.

MK: You were telling me that you wouldn't encourage...

JS: No. Any young people come over and they got a chance to go out and look for a better job, I would rather have them go out and look for a better job. Maybe, if I was to live over my life, probably I would have gone to look for a job.

But because my husband---after he became a supervisor for the City and County [of Honolulu], and my boys were coming out of college, then I feel I could rely on him. Now, he has a job, and me, as a housewife, pineapple is fine. As a housewife. But now, you know, husbands and wives have to work to manage somehow. Like my husband, he earned enough that the little bit money I bring home from pineapple--the compensation--it's sufficient enough to carry us over.

MK: Since you mentioned money right now, I was wondering, what did you use your money for?

JS: My husband and I, both, we put our money together. In other words, my husband is the one that arranged the payments, whatever it is, and I go with him. I feel that he's doing a good job. So, when I have my paycheck, I bring it home, I sign it, and he cashes it. Most of time, my paycheck, we use for the groceries or stuff like that. With whatever money I have, I buy it--I buy the gasoline or whatever. I go to store and I see anything that I think it's on special, I buy it. When I come home, I say, "Eh, you know you owe me money."

"So what you did?"

"Oh, I bought this and that. You owe me money. Pay me back my money." I said that's my spending money, so he gives me back my money. Like I said, both he and I, we get together with our money and we put our money in our savings, whatever it is. We borrowed lot of money to send my children to school and pay big mortgage--\$200 a month. That \$200 a month is kind of steep, but we paid \$200 a month for a mortgage. But then, now this place is my place since 1958, I think. Our place is all paid up. We don't owe anything.

So, with my husband managing our money situation, we got something to look back for it. We got money in savings; we got money in credit union. We can go out on trips. We help my children if they need help--my two boys. My oldest boy, he doesn't need help. He has his own; he help himself. That's what we do--our money, we put it together.

MK: Could you have done all this--educated your children and bought a home and saved--if you didn't work pineapple?

JS: To start with, the pineapple really helped because my husband's paycheck at that time when he went--at Pearl Harbor, he had good money. Then he went to work with City and County (where the pay at that time wasn't as good). He started as only a machinist. Was kind of hard because with the children going to private school, Catholic school, it would be hard. But the cost of living at that time is not as bad as now. I think, yeah, with my help, it really helped. But like my husband appreciates my working and bringing home whatever I can bring home. It's not a big salary that I bring home, but as years go by, our [i.e., cannery employees'] wages go up higher and higher. Even though we don't work a full year, I make more [now] than the people working every day because the wages are high and I'm a supervisor so I get a big pay when I go to work. So, with my money, it really helped.

MK: To sort of close off this interview, I was wondering, what are your thoughts about your long career in pineapple.

JS: Well, like I said, I don't regret working for the pineapple. It's interesting because you meet lot of people--lot of new people--and the job is interesting. It may be boring or monotony to certain people because almost the same thing, but being a supervisor, there's something different. Maybe a different person to work with and a different approach to different people. It was quite interesting. I liked it. I like my lifework.

Only thing, I was fortunate my husband makes good money. So we managed to send our children to school, pay our mortgage, and still eat well. We do eat well. After my boys are all out of school, I traveled to the Islands almost every year. It's not because I haven't seen the Islands because I get to travel with my husband and children, too. But we managed somehow. We got money to travel and yet, money to eat well. That's all I can say. I hope it's interesting. (Laughs)

MK: Thank you very much.

END OF INTERVIEW

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